

**CHARACTERISTICS & RESPONSES:  
NATO'S INITIAL OUTPUTS TO RUSSIAN AGGRESSION IN GEORGIA 2008, AND  
UKRAINE 2014**

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## ABSTRACT

James Alan Davis: Characteristics & Responses, NATO's Initial Outputs to Russian Aggression in Georgia 2008, and Ukraine 2014  
(Under the direction of Robert Jenkins)

This paper analyzes how NATO adapted to events of Russian aggression in Georgia 2008 and Ukraine 2014, to help understand why there was a variance in policy outputs to the crises. The thesis explores how the organization mobilizes different characteristics to meet fluid security environments and how those traits can change over time to meet the need of NATO's member states. To do so, the thesis identifies and links the main traits of NATO to key attributes associated with policy outputs utilizing theoretical perspectives. The thesis argues that the evidence is consistent in showing a preference by NATO and its influential member states of Germany and the United States, to respond as an institution to crises in Georgia and Ukraine. Moreover, events in Ukraine prompted stronger policy responses due to a crisis that impacted all of NATO's key characteristics to include that of an alliance focused on collective defense and that of a community based on values.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AA – Association Agreement  
ABCT – Armored Brigade Combat Team  
ANP – Annual National Program  
AWACS - Airborne Early Warning and Control  
C4 – Command, Control, Communications, and Computer Networks  
DEEP – Defense Education Enhancement Program  
EBRD – European Bank for Reconstruction & Development  
ERI – European Reassurance Initiative  
EU – European Union  
FMF – Foreign Military Financing  
FMS – Foreign Military Sales  
FP – Force Posture  
FY – Fiscal Year  
GDP – Gross Domestic Product  
GTEP – Georgia Train & Equip Program  
HQ - Headquarters  
II – International Institution  
IMET – International Military Education & Training  
IMF – International Monetary Fund  
IO – International Organization  
MS – Member States  
NAC – North Atlantic Council  
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
NFIU – NATO Force Integration Unit  
NGC – NATO Georgia Commission  
NRC – NATO Russia Council  
NRF – NATO Response Force  
NUC – NATO Ukraine Commission

MAP – Membership Action Plan

OSCE – Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe

RAP – Readiness Action Plan

SECGEN – Secretary General

US – United States

VJTF – Very High Readiness Joint Task Force

WoT – War on Terror



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Russian aggression in Georgia in 2008, and the illegal annexation of Crimea, Ukraine in 2014, have renewed security concerns for the transatlantic security alliance. For an alliance that had recently been faced with crisis management and humanitarian aid tasks, a renewed threat has led to new policy outputs to meet these challenges. In each crisis, NATO and its influential member states provided policy responses to the conflict in the form of statements, changes in force posture, and economic factors.<sup>1</sup> However, the organization and its member states provided a stronger policy response to the crisis in Ukraine relating to collective defense.

The variants in outputs have led scholars like John Deni to argue that NATO has returned to a role that is “first and foremost” concerned with conducting collective defense as an alliance versus its role as an organization or that of a community.<sup>2</sup> However, there is a debate within the international relations community of scholars over the role of international security organizations in responding to security crises. Marc Webber helps to explain that these roles are characteristics of NATO:<sup>3</sup> an alliance focused on collective security, an international organization that provides a neutral and interdependent forum for enforcing “rules”, and a community based on shared

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<sup>1</sup> Summits provide venue for supporting economic factors like sanctions for MS. Changes in FP also require funding for programs like defense reform educational assistance.

<sup>2</sup> (Deni, NATO and Article Five, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Characteristics and traits of NATO will be related to different “roles” or “identities” the organization takes in response to changing security environments. For this reason, the thesis will use these words interchangeably.

identities and norms from common values.<sup>4</sup> In search for an answer to the variance in policy outputs, these characteristics will help interpret the policy outputs of NATO and its influential MS by explaining the “role” that was taken by NATO in response to these specific security crises.

Threat perceptions and state interests are two factors that member states of NATO prioritize and balance that impact objectives and policy outputs. In an alliance that had prior to the crisis in Georgia expanded multiple times, these threat perceptions and interests can sometimes differ amongst the MS of NATO. Theoretical explanations for how the alliance maneuvers past these differences differ by the scholar asked and time period analyzed.<sup>5</sup> In the Cold War in the face of a unified threat the alliance was focused on its tasking for collective defense. In the 1990s, the organization transitioned to a role as a community based around collective security and responded to out-of-area humanitarian crises in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on shared values.<sup>6</sup> All the while the organization continued to grow and has developed a more centralized and independent administrative staff than in its founding years.<sup>7</sup> These phases of NATO development and adaptation highlight different interpretations of the role of NATO: that of an alliance with a strong focus on state interests; that of an international organization with its own autonomous power; and, that of a community based upon an expansions of values outside those of just survival and defense.

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<sup>4</sup> (Webber, 2009)

<sup>5</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008). The first chapter details the continuing debate amongst scholars of the lingering questions surrounding the impact of theory and NATO’s political decision-making framework.

<sup>6</sup> (Hendrickson, 2006)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

While the focus of the thesis is on interpreting policy outputs in answer to recent Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, the thesis attempts to analyze these responses based on what NATO is. The key traits of the organization are prioritized and balanced based upon the needs of its member states to help the organization adapt to meet new challenges. In responding to changes in the security environment one characteristic of the organization may be more at play than others, or a combination of traits may be evident. Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall the transition has been ongoing. Humanitarian crises were met by a growing institutional staff by the organization. The alliance has gradually grown in common values. Prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, the alliance was most concerned with the shared value of survival. Actions in the Balkans conflicts signaled an expansion of these common values held by MS and the ability to utilize force to uphold them. With each new member addition, change in institutional capacity, or change to MS prioritization of common values, like humanitarian concerns over that of territorial defense, the alliance learns and grows. The recent reemergence of Russian aggression has renewed territorial defense concerns for the alliance. Which key trait or traits of NATO were evident in these moments of crises, can help indicate how NATO might respond to future crises or simply showcase how NATO has adapted to recent security challenges.

As the organization has continued to expand and meet new security crises, goals and objectives for the alliance are still decided by consensus of all its members. Influence in the process used to reach a consensus within NATO is debated by scholars and policy makers alike.<sup>8</sup> While some scholars like John Mearsheimer have argued that the policies enacted by organizations like NATO are decided as a result of influential member state strategies for

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<sup>8</sup> (Hendrickson, 2006). Ryan Hendrickson contributes to the research on the political decision-making process by examining the ever-changing role of the secretary general and the roles implication from the 1990s forward.

increasing power in the security environment,<sup>9</sup> other scholars have argued that NATO responds with multilateralism, ultimately deciding the policies with bargaining from all sides and indicative of an international organization.<sup>10</sup> Constructivists have linked responses to shared identities and norms, with stronger reactions prompted by actions that go against the “communities values.”<sup>11</sup> Ultimately, NATO enacted policy outputs in response to Russian aggression in Georgia and Ukraine. How do the characteristics of NATO help interpret the policy outputs of the organization in response to Russian aggression in Georgia in 2008 and in Ukraine 2014?

To help explain differences in NATO responses to recent Russian aggression in Ukraine and Georgia, I will use international relation theories to identify attributes of NATO that link the key characteristics to policies. I will investigate the results of the case studies based on the key attributes of NATO. I will apply the three theories to key characteristics of NATO identified by Mark Webber: organization, alliance, and community. I will use the relationship between the key features of NATO and the three theories of realism, neoliberal institutionalism, and constructivism to identify key attributes connected to a characteristic of NATO and its corresponding theoretical perspective. Key attributes were chosen for each characteristic: maximizing power capabilities for NATO as an alliance, interdependent rules-based cooperation as well as centralization and independence for NATO as an organization, and shared identity and shared norms for NATO as a community. The initial Policy outputs by NATO and its influential

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<sup>9</sup> (Mearsheimer, 2001)

<sup>10</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008). The first chapter cites many of the leading scholars’ views based on theory for this argument.

<sup>11</sup> (Webber, 2009)

member states of Germany and the United States to Russian aggression in Georgia and Ukraine will be analyzed. The policy outputs of Germany and the United States will be added to look for consistency of responses with certain characteristics of NATO, i.e. is the alliance acting in a role best described as a community based on shared values and identity or are member states responding more consistently in a role best described as a tool for maximizing power capabilities.<sup>12</sup> The thesis specifically chose Germany and the United States for the influence they currently have in the organization and in the international community at large.<sup>13</sup> In the conclusion I will combine the result of the analytical chapters to formulate my thesis.

In analyzing the policy outputs from NATO based on its key traits, the results will be show NATO consistently responding to events in Georgia and Ukraine as an international institution. However, the evidence indicates consistency of NATO acting as a community based on shared norms and identity and an alliance focused on maximizing power capabilities to the crisis in Ukraine. The evidence explains that institutional responses like the creation of the NATO-Georgia Commission, did not prevent future Russian aggression in Ukraine. Instead the events in Ukraine represented the second recent instance of territorial intrusion into a NATO partner<sup>14</sup> and placed events that took place in Georgia in a new light. The aggression in Ukraine was geographically closer to NATO MS in the Baltics and in Poland. Together the changing security environment in Ukraine confronted all three key traits of NATO. It represented a threat

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<sup>12</sup> Exploring just NATO policy responses would suffice for analyzing the “role” of NATO as an organization. Key MS responses are needed to compare NATO’s response relating to its key traits of an alliance and community.

<sup>13</sup> Germany’s influential role in the European Union based upon its economic might. The US influential role is based upon its military and economic might.

<sup>14</sup> While Georgia and Ukraine were not MS of NATO. They had entered into partnerships with NATO which will be discussed more in depth later in the case studies.

to NATO as an institution by showcasing that any partnership between NATO and non-member states would not prevent territorial aggression by the Russians. It renewed territorial defense concerns due to proximity to NATO MS. And, the events showcased a threat to NATO's shared identity of international norms like peaceful resolution to conflict through multilateralism. This thesis will argue that the evidence is consistent in showing a preference by NATO and its influential member states of Germany and the United States, to respond as an institution to crises in Georgia and Ukraine: while the latter incident prompted stronger policy responses due to a crisis that impacted all of NATO's key characteristics, including that of an alliance focused on collective defense and that of a community based on values.

## CHAPTER 2: A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

### What is the Focus of the Research?

The evidence to be interpreted is NATO policy outputs immediately following Russian aggression in Georgia 2008 and Ukraine 2014. Research will be focused on the years prior and after the specific instance of initial Russian aggression in Georgia and Ukraine. The central question is how NATO and MS responded during periods of crises. These key instances give critical insight into which attributes of the organization are evident in those uncertain moments of time.

### *Policy Outputs*

Prior to introducing or discussing the evidence it is important to discuss what the evidence will be. Definitions are needed for key terminology. Policy is a term that possesses different meanings depending on whom is asked. NATO relates policy to agreed-upon principles by NATO members to achieve specific outcomes.<sup>15</sup> The United States Department of Defense distinguishes policy as a broad course of action or statements of guidance adopted by the national government to pursue national objectives.<sup>16</sup> The thesis considers that policy is strategic by nature and borrows from the US Air Force's Lemay Center for Policy's understanding: that it

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<sup>15</sup> (NATO Terminology, 2018)

<sup>16</sup> (Defense, 2018)

is specified guidance that must be taken.<sup>17</sup> Policy for the purposes of the thesis will not be related to official state stances or NATO stances. It will be understood as “action/s” taken, that is/are strategic by nature, instructive, and are emplaced to achieve specific outcomes. Simply put, policy responses are defined as a set of tools at the disposal of NATO or its member states to achieve their strategic goals. In this regard, I will use the term policy output or response interchangeably.

Table 1 Examples of NATO Policy		
Force Posture	Statements	Economic Factors
Troop Movements	Communiques	MS Sanctions
Deployments	Strategic Concepts	Funding/Assistance
Changes in NATO Structures	Press Releases	MS FMS/FMF
Defense Planning	Summit Statements	MS Financial Aid
Increase in Troop Strength	Publications	Military Procurements

Examples of policy responses to be studied include statements, press releases, and strategic concepts. In addition to statements, policy outputs will also be defined by broad courses of actions, as they relate to major economic changes or changes in military force posture. While NATO does not introduce economic sanctions, like all international organizations it provides a forum for multilateralism for its MS who possess the capability to introduce such economic measures. Economic measures are also indicative of changes that can increase or decrease power capabilities of MS or the threat faced by the alliance: such as military aid or foreign military sales of equipment, foreign funding/assistance, troop movements, and/or defense procurement planning. Examples of changes in force posture are major troop movements, staging, deployments, exercises, or any activities that can provide impact to the military capabilities of

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<sup>17</sup> (Curtis Lemay Center for Doctrine Development and Education, 2015)



the organization, its MS, or its partners. However, force posture changes can also indicate any changes to the structures of NATO: i.e. membership in the alliance, new partnerships, or strengthening institutional ties by bolstering civilian staff or existing partnerships.<sup>18</sup> I argue that increases in these areas allow for the alliance to have greater power capabilities, thus are included in the force posture changes.

Examples of policy outputs from the year prior to each incident will be examined to provide a baseline perspective. Policy outputs by NATO and/or its members during the time frames listed were not equal in their impact or scope. A statement of condemnation in the face of aggression is not equal to major troop movements or a consensus decision of NATO to fund major exercises. Troop deployments of 500 personnel are therefore not universally accepted as stronger or weaker than major economic sanctions for instance. Either can be preferred options by MS for policy outputs.

### **Linking Theory to Outputs**

According to scholars David Armitage and Mark Webber, structural realism, liberal institutionalism, and social constructivism are the dominant perspectives advanced by academics on how NATO responds to crises.<sup>19</sup> Both scholars posit that aligning a singular theoretical perspective to NATO policies is less favorable than comparing to a multi-theoretical view.<sup>20</sup> Armitage's argument says a theoretical perspective might change depending on the assignment

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<sup>18</sup> Examples include taking an existing partner and extending a Membership Action Plan (MAP)

<sup>19</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008; Edited by Webber, 2016) Armitage presents theory as it relates to non-crises moments such political bargaining relating to the European Defense Community. Mark Webber has authored several works relating to the study of theory in NATO. The two scholars are not the only scholars who have completed work in the field but represent the most recent and relevant work to the subject matter.

<sup>20</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008, pp. 7-11) (Webber, 2009, pp. 7-10)

of NATO's identity as either an 'individual, group, or bureaucracy.'<sup>21</sup> Webber argues that introducing multiple perspectives presents a broader understanding of the issue being studied and is 'complementary' rather than 'conflicting'.<sup>22</sup> In 2016, Webber wrote that the introduction of multiple perspectives is not 'pluralism' in the 'combining' of theories, but instead the viewing of the issue at hand through different perspectives which enable the viewing of each issues strengths and weaknesses.<sup>23</sup>

I agree with the two scholars' opinions on the applicability of viewing through multiple perspectives and the choices in theories they chose. NATO presents a unique situation for scholars and policy-makers. The objectives for the alliance and the policy decisions to achieve its goals are enacted by a consensus-based decision process in NATO's North Atlantic Council.<sup>24</sup> The assemblage of member states since its inception has not been static in terms of common goals, threat perceptions, or even actors making consensus for policy responses difficult.<sup>25</sup> The alliance has steadily enlarged since the fall of the Soviet Union, with three expansions prior to the events in Ukraine bringing in an additional twelve members.<sup>26</sup> Decision-making has become more complex due to NATO growing as an organization, the number of new members in NATO, and the interests of each of these new MS. It is unlikely that all members possess equal perceptions of policy goals, and with each addition in membership the possibility of

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<sup>21</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008, p. 11)

<sup>22</sup> (Webber, 2009, pp. 9-10)

<sup>23</sup> (Edited by Webber, 2016, pp. 9-12)

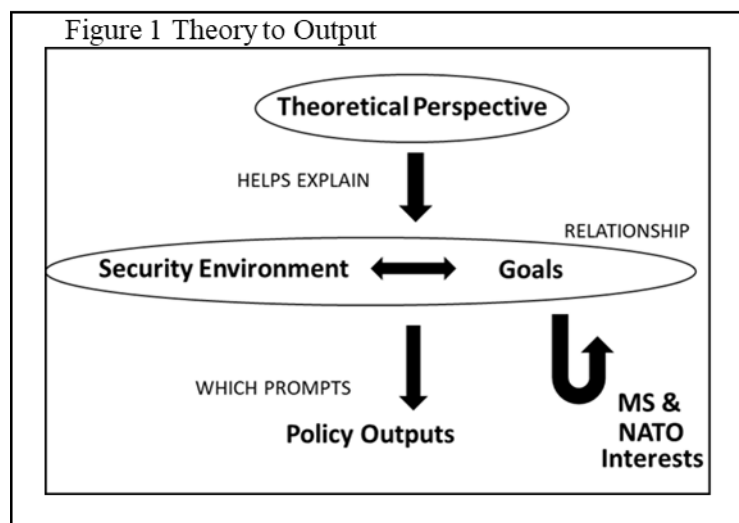
<sup>24</sup> (Clausson, 2007, p. 86)

<sup>25</sup> Goals can be defined as the objectives set forth in NATO's Strategic Concepts.

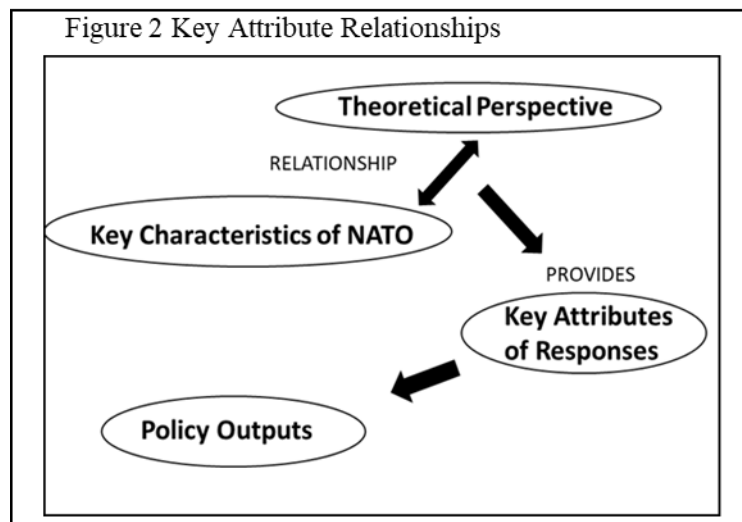
<sup>26</sup> (Sloan, 2016)

disagreement grows. The accumulation of more members to NATO requires continuous adaptation of goals and outputs to meet the needs of its member states. To understand how the recent additions to NATO and the growth of the organization impact policies, it is helpful to apply multiple theories to help understand all vantage points in the security environment.

To apply a theory to the policy differences directly presents a challenge. Multiple theories can be applied to policy outputs and be misinterpreted if proper context of the security environment is lacking. To simplify and best understand how the multi-theoretical approach to the thesis will be linked, I will demonstrate a clear connection between the theories and the focus of the study, NATO policy outputs. I posit that policies are enacted to fulfill an objective or a “goal”. Goals are implemented as a result of the interaction with the security environment NATO finds itself in, which in turn is based on the interests of the MS and of the organization. The theories help explain the relationship of how the environment (e.g. a reemergent threat from Russia), converges with the interests of MS and NATO while setting goals to be achieved by policy responses.



To help apply theories to understanding the evidence, I will utilize Mark Webber’s key characteristics of NATO as they relate to the main theories to be examined. I will use the key traits of NATO associated with the theories to build an understanding of how states and IOs exhibit behaviors during security crises in accordance with each perspective. For every theory I intend to introduce “key attributes” that can be associated with the three characteristics of NATO. I focus on identifying the qualities most associated with the characteristics of NATO.<sup>27</sup> This knowledge will help build a framework from which policy outputs by NATO and its key member states of Germany and the United States can be interpreted for consistency.



According to Mark Webber, NATO possesses three “characteristics”: an inter-governmental organization, an alliance with a collective tasking for security, and a community.<sup>28</sup> Webber suggests that the three traits of NATO can be explained by the dominant international

<sup>27</sup> Each theoretical perspective in this chapter will focus on expected policy responses according to a certain characteristic. From these, I select the attributes I believe are “key”. The attributes listed are the most consistent with the relationship between NATO’s core traits and the theoretical perspectives identified.

<sup>28</sup> (Webber, 2009); Essay section titled “How to Study NATO.” Third Paragraph.

relation theories to provide insight into how common policy is made inside of NATO.<sup>29</sup> The three primary theories examined in the context of this chapter are realism, liberal institutionalism, and constructivism. In examining the policy outputs of NATO and its key influential states, consistency and patterns might indicate which attributes of NATO were being exhibited in policy output creation. By examining these policies outputs through a theoretical framework that allows for multiple perspectives, the evidence can provide scholars and policy makers sagacity concerning past responses, existing issues within the alliance that impact security crises, and future concerns.

#### *An Alliance with a Focus on Collective Defense*

In this section, the role and perception of NATO as an alliance is presented in relation to realism theory. The term ‘alliance’ will imply the banding together of states to achieve a common goal or goals. The bedrock of NATO is the Article 5 clause of NATO’s founding charter. Article 5 states that ‘an attack on one or more of the members, is an attack against all,’ and solidifies that members will come to the assistance of the country or countries attacked.<sup>30</sup> However NATO is more than just an alliance that offers treaty protection. The structural framework for collective defense in NATO offers the allied states a unified and staffed military command structure, planning procedures and guidance, and a place for political bargaining to take place in the North Atlantic Council.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> (Webber, 2009); Essay section titled “How to Study NATO.”

<sup>30</sup> (The North Atlantic Treaty, 1949)

<sup>31</sup> (Sloan, 2016)

Theorists such as Kenneth Waltz, have utilized realism theory to explain state actors' behaviors.<sup>32</sup> Waltz argues that the world is anarchic, meaning without a centralized power structure.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, states are primarily concerned with their ability to survive because they exist in a world of perpetual conflict that lacks an overarching central source of power.<sup>34</sup> Waltz maintains that while states possess some form of military capabilities to hurt one another, these capabilities are not equal.<sup>35</sup> Mark Webber explains, Waltz's concern is the distribution of 'capabilities' among the states, and the distribution determines what the states can and can't do.<sup>36</sup> The distribution of 'capabilities' can impact policies, states that possess higher levels of capabilities set the policy tone that less powerful states may be more inclined to agree with, or band together to compete against.<sup>37</sup>

In realism theory, external threat perceptions are very important in deciding policy responses by states and alliances. If a common threat exists, states might band together because of the incentive for intra-alliance cooperation such as higher combined capabilities. According to John Mearsheimer, a state's ultimate goal is survival which drives the push for greater capabilities than those of other states.<sup>38</sup> Weaker states in their quest for survival would seek an alliance with an influential MS instead of competition for capabilities for "stability" purposes.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008). Chapter 1. Section titled "Structural Realism."

<sup>33</sup> (Waltz, 1995)

<sup>34</sup> (Waltz, 1995)

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> (Webber, 2009, p. 12)

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> (Mearsheimer, 2001)

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

Mearsheimer presents the argument that NATO might see a demise in the aftermath of the Cold War.<sup>40</sup> Central to his argument is the assumption that a lack of a unified threat would abolish the necessity of a collective defense treaty-based organization.<sup>41</sup> Weaker states would not need to align themselves with a state possessing higher capabilities, and stronger states would lack incentive to band together with weaker states to maximize their capabilities.

Identifying a key characteristic of realism is useful in understanding NATO's response as an alliance to Russian threats. The theory is focused on the survival of its members. The main characteristic of the theory would imply a unified threat perception of its members would result in MS seeking to maximize their capabilities according to John Mearsheimer. Policy outputs indicative of an organization or state reacting in this manner would include defensive actions in terms of exercises, defense procurements, troop movements, and/or economic actions that increase the alliance's ability to project capabilities or decrease the threat's ability to maximize their capabilities. NATO's responses according to the theory would then suggest the member states would respond militarily (even if only with exercises), seek to maximize their power capabilities, and/or decrease their threat's ability to project power.

### *An International Organization*

To understand the concept of NATO possessing the characteristic of an international organization, I will focus on neoliberal institutionalism theory. Prior, the thesis examines the

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<sup>40</sup> (Edited by Webber, 2016). Chapter 3.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

definition of an international organization (IO).<sup>42</sup> Mearsheimer posits that the definition of institutions is focused on ‘rules’ which then ‘stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with one another.’<sup>43</sup> Robert Keohane argues rules are more pronounced and can be both ‘formal and informal,’ and come attached with ‘prescribed roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations.’<sup>44</sup> I agree with scholars Lisa Martin and Beth Simmons, that John Mearsheimer’s explanation for international ‘institutions’ provides a better definition than those that possess rigid defined roles for state actors in an organization.<sup>45</sup>

The perspective of neoliberal institutionalism theory can be applied to studying policy in NATO. The theory agrees with realism, in that states are rational actors in a world lacking a central power source.<sup>46</sup> The disagreement comes in part with how states seek to “survive” in such a world. Liberal institutionalists, like Robert Keohane, argue that the preferred and most beneficial route for states to assure survival is to be in an “institution” based on rules.<sup>47</sup> Through a shared understanding of the rules, institutions are an optimal path forward for states to maximize benefits through cooperation. Nation states in an institution seek a rules structure that in turn gives every state involved credibility, reduced transaction costs, and stability resulting in mutual benefit. In applying the theory specifically to Europe and security studies, scholar Stanley

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<sup>42</sup> (Simmons, 2013) I will use the term “international organization” and “international institution” interchangeably. While more nuance could be provided with additional research, it is not the focus of the thesis. NATO possesses attributes of both a “brick and mortar” organization with a staff, and also a forum for multilateralism with a structure based upon “rules”.

<sup>43</sup> (Simmons, 2013, p. 328)

<sup>44</sup> (Simmons, 2013)

<sup>45</sup> (Simmons, 2013)

<sup>46</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008, pp. 29-37)

<sup>47</sup> (Keohane, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Summer, 1995), pp. 39-51)



Hoffman argues that by creating ‘overlapping institutions’ states which may have previously been ‘potential adversaries’ are joined together for mutual benefit with the institution providing ‘reassurance and insurance’ to its members.<sup>48</sup>

Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal argue that institutions have been useful to states based on the ‘centralization’ and ‘independence’ they provide.<sup>49</sup> They posit that ‘centralization’ has inherent benefits, such as ‘collective pooling of resources,’ ‘lowered ‘transaction costs’ for items like military equipment, and ‘norm coordination’.<sup>50</sup> ‘Independence’ also allows states to contribute to policies enacted by the institution that they otherwise may not have conducted unilaterally. They use the term ‘laundering’ to describe such actions.<sup>51</sup> Institutions are also a way of ensuring that states can “trust” that opposing states are not cheating or ensure that cheating is “limited”.<sup>52</sup> According to their argument an institution possesses ‘administrative staff’ that acts as a ‘neutral’ intermediary.<sup>53</sup>

For example, disagreements over the unified response to the conflict in Bosnia in the 1990s were apparent between the European members of NATO and the Americans (who initially advocated for no troops on the ground).<sup>54</sup> NATO Secretary General Willy Claes oversaw a

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<sup>48</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008) Reassurance that there exists a neutral party to ensure states do not try to break the rules to gain capabilities. Insurance being that states have protection in an alliance that is structured on rules with penalties for those that do not comply with the common values like territorial integrity.

<sup>49</sup> (Abbott, Vol. 42, No. 1 (FEB., 1998))

<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> (Abbott, Vol. 42, No. 1 (FEB., 1998))

<sup>52</sup> Ibid

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> (Yost D. S., 2014) p. 128

transformation of the role of the Secretary General in providing direction and allowing consensus to be reached during his one year tenure on issues ranging from targeting choices for aerial bombardments to addressing which “red lines” had been crossed to trigger such a response. Claes used his position to ensure disagreements over targeting and the use of NATO air campaigns could be resolved between MS.<sup>55</sup> In doing so, he kept ambassadors longer at meetings than previous SECGENs, and at times used existing authorizations to implement decisions versus reconvening the NAC.<sup>56</sup> With this new expanded role, NATO administrative staff possessed greater ability to make policy decisions, which in the 1950s-1960s would have been made at the national level.

Two characteristics of what a neoliberal institutionalism theory-based NATO policy response to Russian aggression would be multilateralism and a “rules” grounded response. Important traits associated with the theory are a central and independent administrative staff that encourages the following of rules and discourages cheating. Partnerships or other existing interdependent institutional structures would likely be sought to be strengthened by increasing its taskings, increasing membership, or by the creation of new overlapping institutional structures.<sup>57</sup> More institutional systems, commissions, and/or structures would be sought. Another trait would be that of multilateralism, a focus from the member states would be on utilizing NATO as an intermediary to first end the conflict versus that of any offensive action with military forces. Member states would show a preference for a multilateral response that would be guided through

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<sup>55</sup> (Hendrickson, 2006)

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

<sup>57</sup> An example of an overlapping structure: Ukraine was a NATO Partner for Peace and had the NATO-Ukraine Council. After the annexation of Crimea, a trust was created for the creation of various defense reform measures.

the administrative structure and system of NATO versus that of influential member states unilateral actions.

### *NATO as a Community*

Constructivism theory focuses on the social construction of ideas and institutions.<sup>58</sup> The ideas are interrelated to an identity that is created through socially constructed norms and values.<sup>59</sup> Values are the shared ideals that the community wants to uphold, such as human rights and liberal democratic ideals.<sup>60</sup> Norms are how the values are achieved, like a commitment to multilateralism through political bargaining in the NAC.<sup>61</sup> The norms provide the structural process to uphold the shared identity.<sup>62</sup> The community is therefore made of actors sharing a “culture” based on these norms and values. Mark Webber argues that constructivism relates to NATO through positive and negative perceptions based upon common identities and accepted norms.<sup>63</sup> NATO shapes common identity through shared values that include human rights, democratic principles, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, and self-determination.

The perception of identities, norms, and values shape how influential state actors and NATO, as a community,<sup>64</sup> responds to security crises. In realism, states are willing to be in an alliance and respond to security crises to increase their capacity or to appease an influential MS

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<sup>58</sup> (Schimmelfennig, 2003, p. 69)

<sup>59</sup> Ibid p. 71

<sup>60</sup> Ibid

<sup>61</sup> Ibid

<sup>62</sup> Ibid

<sup>63</sup> (Webber, 2009, p. 22)

<sup>64</sup> According to (Schimmelfennig, 2003), community is a group that shares an identity.

for greater stability in order to survive. In a neoliberalism perspective, rules provide benefits to state actors, limit cheating, and require responses based partly on common values. In a constructivist's viewpoint, rules are followed based on shared identities and norms based on common values.<sup>65</sup> While attributes of neoliberal institutionalism theory helped identify the push for a greater role by the NATO Secretary General, it failed to explain why NATO sent forces to the Balkans when the "rules" did not call for their deployment.<sup>66</sup> A better answer can be found in constructivism theory. NATO forces responded in Bosnia as a result of humanitarian concerns. Policy outputs can then be interpreted as being representative of the communities shared values and their identity at the time of implementation.

The characteristics of constructivism theory in relation to acts of Russian aggression would focus on NATO as a community. Policy outputs would be consistent with a shared identity, to include common values. A failure to see action could indicate either multiple threat perceptions or an inconsistent application of values. Constructivism in the case of NATO would take the shared values from strategic concepts and would be expected to apply shared values consistently regardless of geography. The means to achieve shared values, the alliance's norms, would be focused on the norms by which NATO operates: political bargaining, consensus-based outputs, and strong partnerships even with non-member affiliated states.

### **Applying Evidence**

In both case studies, evidence will be gathered in each of the key policy output areas of force posture, economic factors, and statements. Evidence will be introduced as it relates to the

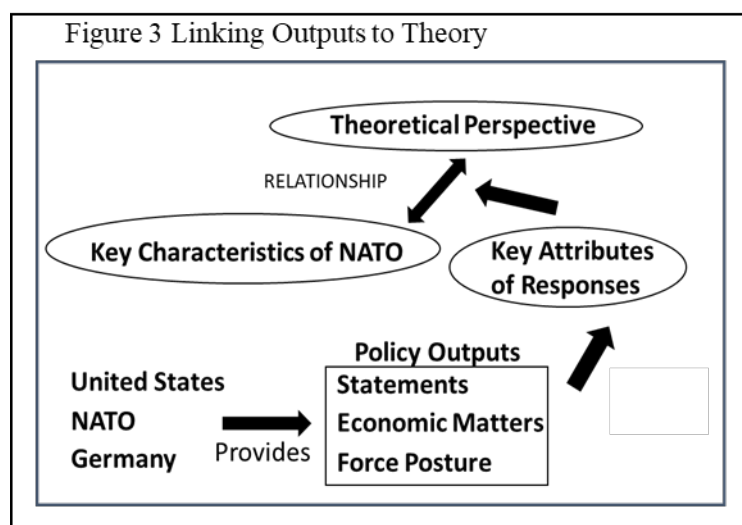
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<sup>65</sup> (Schimmelfennig, 2003)

<sup>66</sup> The Balkans were an out-of-area conflict. Meaning Article 5 of the NATO charter was not utilized in sending the forces.

key attributes of the characteristics of NATO: an international institution, an alliance focused on collective defense, and NATO as a community. Policy outputs from the key influential states will provide evidence that:

- a) impacted the path NATO took in policy response
- b) preceded NATO's response
- c) can be used to triangulate reasoning for why NATO pursued a certain path



The analysis of the evidence will take part in the case studies. The evidence will be presented in chronological order according to type of policy output. Both case studies will review NATO policy responses prior to reviewing outputs for the United States and Germany. At the conclusion of each case study the analysis of the responses will be presented. Policy outputs will be analyzed for consistency with the key attributes of each NATO characteristic.

### **Attribute of NATO as an “Alliance”**

The first key attribute belongs to an alliance. Building from realism theory, the traits of NATO as an alliance can be characterized by key actions that act as a bridge between theory and

output. I will introduce this key attribute and explain the differences of approach and how it can overlap with other theoretical perspectives key attributes.

*Key Attribute of NATO as an Alliance: Maximizing Power Capabilities*

A key attribute of the characteristic of NATO as an alliance is the member states unilaterally and/or collectively seeking to maximize power capabilities in times of crisis. Realism is useful in explaining the logic behind the accumulation of capabilities during the Cold War. Realism posits that states seek to maximize their power in relation to the threat encountered.<sup>67</sup> The ultimate goal and value shared by MS is survival. MS interests come first in policy outputs.<sup>68</sup> In linking with security crises, I posit that states acting consistently with this viewpoint prefer a smaller alliance unless a new partner or ally presents an increase in capabilities. NATO expansionism would be stopped unless it is in the interest of MS, which include economic interests or increased power capabilities from the prospective new member. Unlike constructivism, boundaries matter and norms and values matter only if they help the MS interests in pursuing power. A unified threat was presented to members of the transatlantic alliance by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. NATO brought about “tools” to allow for a greater collection of capabilities: a unified joint nation military command structure, planning committees for the purposes of defense planning and procurement, and additional power capabilities from pooling resources collectively. In responding to a security crisis, states seek to increase their power capacity. Linking to Russian aggression in 2008 and 2014, the attribute suggests policy responses that are consistent with states building capabilities in relation to the

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<sup>67</sup> (Webber, 2009)

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

threat faced. Realism suggests that the actor in maximizing capabilities can be either NATO or its MS. Therefore, outputs from each can provide evidence for increasing military capabilities or expose responses between the alliance and MS that are inconsistent with confronting a threat: for example, when NATO acts to increase capabilities but a MS does not.

Table 2		
Policy Examples of Key Attribute of NATO as an Alliance: Maximizing Power Capabilities		
Statements	Force Posture	Economic Factors
Not seen with this attribute: declarations that support maximizing power, would belong to Force Posture or Economic Factors	A change (normally an increase) impacting: the defense procurement planning process, rebalancing military forces and civilian workers, lethal aid, military exercises, defense spending, troop deployments, prepositioning military equipment, or other positive change to capabilities.	Examples of economic actions that impact maximizing power capabilities include increases of military sales to partner or allied nations, funding of exercises or security cooperation events, and/or sanctions that limit the ability of the threat to expand its power capabilities.

### Attributes of NATO as an “Organization”

I will now introduce two key attributes associated with the theory of neoliberal institutionalism. The two attributes are examples from which policy outputs can be evaluated for consistency in connection with the key traits of NATO as an organization.

#### *Key Attribute #1 of NATO as an Organization: Interdependent Rules Based Cooperation<sup>69</sup>*

As referenced in chapter two, neoliberal institutionalism argues rules encourage cooperation through a structured process. Capabilities then don’t prompt compliance with shared values like respect for territorial borders, it is the “rules” of the structural institutions. In applying this attribute to the characteristics of NATO as an organization, in security crises the first actions

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<sup>69</sup> (Webber, 2009)

would be a rules-based response through a multilateral mechanism to prompt compliance of the standards established by the organization. The rules either enforce or create the overlapping interdependent structures that incentivize cooperation through compliance with the rules set forth by the members.<sup>70</sup>

Table 3		
<i>Policy Examples Key Attribute #1 of NATO as an Organization: Interdependent Rules Based Cooperation</i>		
Statements	Force Posture	Economic Factors
Announcements as policy responses would seek to identify the institution as the primary actor instead of an influential MS. Outputs would be generated through multilateral efforts. Key indicators might include the organization or its administrative staff issuing guidance prior to responses from its influential members.	Changes would include actions on the civilian and military sides of NATO as an organization: changes in programs for defense education, partnership programs, commissions, or dialogues between the states. Other changes would be the expansion of unified joint command structures. The creation of joint military headquarters or command structures, which would indicate “overlapping” institutional structures to the existing command structure.	Economic actions as a result of political bargaining through NATO mechanisms such as summits: to provide policy outputs focused on tasks outside of collective defense and provide a more complex interdependency amongst MS. Examples might include the endorsement of sanctions or calls for collective economic actions through NATO structures. The creation of economic trusts, establishment of centers focused on educating defense employees, funding or economic support for training of military service members.

*Key Attribute #2 of NATO as an Organization: Centralization and Independence*<sup>71</sup>

Referenced in chapter two is Abbott and Snidal’s argument that IOs possess the functions of centralization and independence.<sup>72</sup> A strong centralized “apparatus” that takes on greater

<sup>70</sup> (Armitage JR, 2008)

<sup>71</sup> (Abbott, Vol. 42, No. 1 (FEB., 1998))

<sup>72</sup> Ibid



responsibility independently of member states.<sup>73</sup> The characteristics would suggest an administrative staff that has demonstrable capacity to act as a third party in disputes between MS. Institutionalism suggests this attribute could contribute alternative goals and interests in setting objectives for the organization. In the case of a security crisis, NATO staff would then be a key arbitrator in policy disputes amongst MS.

Table 4		
<i>Policy Examples Key Attribute #2 of NATO as an Organization: Centralization and Independence</i>		
Statements	Force Posture	Economic Factors
Statements as policy responses would see an expanded role of the Secretary General of NATO. Policy outputs from influential members would defer to NATO in matters like commentary of joint security crises. Meetings, summits, or special meetings of which NATO acts as a neutral third-party arbitrator. Large scale changes to a multi-lateral organizational structure, such as the hiring or staffing of more employees.	Changes would include NATO acting as an independent actor in deciding disagreements between MS on FP responses: where to base troops, lethal aid, and other FP related issues. Any force posture changes that give indication of a NATO centralized force structure, either by extending the current force posture or the creation of new units or headquarter structures. Military aid, planning in defense procurements, or other military financing that enables a neutral third party based on multilateralism to impact the capabilities of a MS or partner state.	NATO as an organization providing influence on areas like implementing economic sanctions. An increase in funding for states experiencing crisis from NATO as an organization.

### Attributes of NATO as a “Community”

In this section constructivism, and its shared community based on value and norms will be applied to the aspect of policy outputs where NATO and its influential MS acted according to a role of a community.

<sup>73</sup> (Abbott, Vol. 42, No. 1 (FEB., 1998))

### *Key Attribute #1 of NATO as a Community: Shared Identity*

A shared identity of the community is shaped from common values such as survival, common defense, humanitarian concerns, and the liberal democratic order. The attribute will suggest parameters for how to look for outputs that are consistent with NATO's trait of a community. The primary motivator for shared identity is to build up the values of the community. In responding to security crises, borders are not the focal point, instead it is the relationship between the details of the crisis in comparison with the shared values that the community identifies with. Bosnia and Kosovo represent a good example of "shared identity" in action. The community responded to out of area ethnic conflicts because it was against their shared identity based on humanitarian values.

Table 5		
<i>Policy Examples Key Attribute #1 of NATO as a Community: Shared Identity</i>		
Statements	Force Posture	Economic Factors
Announcements as policy responses will be examined for differences in language. Are events against values such as territorial integrity, or broader to include concerns regarding humanitarian issues, the liberal democratic order, or shared ideals. In the immediate aftermath of the crises, did world leaders respond to the events as matters that "shock" the international communities shared values: or was the response less shocking and more of calls to "respect borders".	Changes in FP based on the trait of shared identities would include stronger responses for events that went against the shared identity of the community of MS. Similar incidents should prompt similar policy outputs: territorial incursions should see similar responses. If shared identity is not had, the attribute would suggest weaker policy outputs and perhaps a fray in the threat perception of the alliance.	Economic indicators would mirror those of FP. If shared identity of the community is challenged, consistent policy outputs would result in similar crises. The expectation would be one of multilateralism.

### *Key Attribute #2 of NATO as a Community: Shared Norms*

The norms of constructivism are the means in which the community responds. It is the agreed process for constructivism that provides responses, basing its action from established principles and mechanisms for dealing with crises.<sup>74</sup> An example might be that MS respond to security crises through multilateral consensus in the NAC. Compliance with the structural process is integral to NATO acting as a community. A multilateral approach to solving problems is expected, and if absent is indicative of a weakened alliance.<sup>75</sup> However, in constructivism a multilateral approach results from the agreed to norms and community identity and not from a belief in “rules” based interdependency that promotes compliance through institutionalism.

Table 6		
<i>Policy Examples Key Attribute #2 of NATO as a Community: Shared Norms</i>		
Statements	Force Posture	Economic Factors
Shared norms are the means in which announcements are made. A community would respond through the organization and is not consistent with unilateral statements. In moments of crises, the shared norms would indicate a traditional response of what was expected of the organization. The community if unified in action would respond with multilateralism.	If consistent with previous responses, then norms are being held in accordance with the perspective. If a change in norms of the organization in FP occurs, it might be indicative of a weakened alliance or another perspective at work	If consistent with previous responses, then norms are being held in accordance with the perspective. If a change in norms of the organization in economic factors occur, it might be indicative of a weakened alliance or another perspective at work

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<sup>74</sup> (Webber, 2009)

<sup>75</sup> If absent it might be better explained from a different theoretical perspective

### **CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDY OF NATO AND KEY MEMBERS POLICY OUTPUTS AS A RESULT OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION IN GEORGIA IN 2008**

The following case study involves policy responses of NATO, and its key member states of Germany and the United States, in response to or as a result of Russian actions within the generally accepted<sup>76</sup> international boundaries of Georgia in 2008. The study is designed to highlight key policy outputs by NATO, Germany, and the US prior to the conflict in 2007, leading to the conflict in early 2008, during and immediately following military actions in August 2008, and in 2009. The case study framework will first examine the evidence of what transpired within the borders of Georgia and follow with evidence of instigating factors<sup>77</sup> of the conflict. The case study will then first introduce the policy outputs<sup>78</sup> that resulted from NATO, then from the United States, and from Germany. The review of the policy outputs will place the outputs into three separate categories: statements, force posture, and/or economic measures. Policy outputs provided in the case study are not all inclusive, and instead represent responses during the listed time period by each actor that are consistent with the earlier defined parameters

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<sup>76</sup> Accepted by leading national powers such as Germany, France, USA, UK, Japan; not accepted by the Russians

<sup>77</sup> Instigating factors to be defined as accepted actions of war or actions that would provoke a military defensive reaction

<sup>78</sup> Refer to framework chapter for definition of “policy” and “policy outputs”

of the three characteristics of NATO.<sup>79</sup> A lack of policy output in the form of statements, force posture changes, or economic measures will also be cited as evidence.

## **Timeline**

Since the end of the Cold War the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the territory of Georgia have seen continuous conflict. A brutal civil war in the early 1990s resulted in many dead and Russian ‘peacekeepers’ in South Ossetia.<sup>80</sup> Following the Rose revolution, the government of Georgia continuously tried to end the ongoing disputes by offering concessions like autonomy to the region.<sup>81</sup> However, both regions had separatist fighters that were backed by Russia.<sup>82</sup> Russia had for years allowed residents in both regions to obtain Russian citizenship and passports.<sup>83</sup> As dialogue around Georgia potentially joining NATO grew stronger, the tensions in the region also increased. In July 2008, a series of assassinations and military conflicts between separatists and Georgian forces took place.<sup>84</sup> The same month there was a military exercise in Russia at the Georgian border that was very similar to the next month’s conflict.<sup>85</sup> During this

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<sup>79</sup> Every statement will not be analyzed, instead a representative sample will be provided; i.e. a Presidential statement may be provided to explain a stance and press releases confirming the presidential statement will not be included in the case study.

<sup>80</sup> (Nichol, Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008:, March 3, 2009)

<sup>81</sup> Ibid

<sup>82</sup> Ibid

<sup>83</sup> Ibid

<sup>84</sup> Ibid

<sup>85</sup> (Dr. Ariel Cohen, June 09, 2011, Accessed on 16FEB2019)

timeframe, as Georgia sounded warning calls to the international community, Russian air forces conducted flights over Georgian territory.<sup>86</sup>

On August 7, South Ossetia claimed that Georgian forces launched an artillery attack into the region, while Georgia “reported intense bombings of Georgian villages in South Ossetia”.<sup>87</sup> The Russian Security Council met the next day and immediately launched a large-scale attack against Georgia.<sup>88</sup> Reports indicated that hundreds of aircraft and tens of thousands Russian soldiers took part in military actions in both regions.<sup>89</sup> The Russian Black Sea fleet provided reinforcements to the region on August 10.<sup>90</sup> The fighting took place not only in both regions, but up to just miles away from the Georgian capital of Tbilisi.<sup>91</sup> On August 12, a preliminary peace plan was brokered.<sup>92</sup> However, Russian forces continued to “degrade” Georgia military defense structures outside of the regions to create a “buffer zone”.<sup>93</sup> On August 25, Russia formally recognizes Abkhazia and South Ossetia as “independent”.<sup>94</sup> The Russian forces finally withdraw to the regions as part of the “follow-on ceasefire agreement” signed on September 8.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> (Dr. Ariel Cohen, June 09, 2011, Accessed on 16FEB2019)

<sup>87</sup> (Nichol, Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008:, March 3, 2009)

<sup>88</sup> (Nichol, Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008:, March 3, 2009)

<sup>89</sup> (Dr. Ariel Cohen, June 09, 2011, Accessed on 16FEB2019)

<sup>90</sup> Ibid

<sup>91</sup> (Nichol, Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008:, March 3, 2009)

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

<sup>93</sup> Ibid

<sup>94</sup> Ibid

<sup>95</sup> Ibid

## Prelude to War

Prior to Russian aggression in 2008, Georgia was important to both Russia and the United States. The area had signs of potential warfare between the Georgians and Russians existing for decades.<sup>96</sup> In the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin Wall, Georgia was the site of civil wars in the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which ended with a ceasefire and the presence of Russian forces under the pretense of peacekeepers.<sup>97</sup> The land in the disputed areas was significantly important to Russia, due in part to its geostrategic importance in the region, with military basing advantages for Russia in terms of air and naval forces, and in part to its strategic location in blocking potential new oil pipelines through Russia or Turkey.<sup>98</sup> Georgia was also significant for its contributions to the War on Terror being conducted by the United States. The Americans considered Georgia's contributions, involving overflight rights and the support to the allied effort in terms of personnel.<sup>99</sup>

Geopolitically the events in 2008 were not conducted in a political vacuum. NATO had declared an intention for Georgia to eventually become a member prior to the conflict during its 2008 summit.<sup>100</sup> The United States had lobbied for a Membership Action Plan (MAP) but ultimately the member states stopped just shy of the plan while saying the MAP was possible in

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<sup>96</sup> (Markovic, 17 September 2008), sections War in Abkhazia and War in South Ossetia list the ongoing feud regarding borders and representation of the people following the civil war in the 1990s

<sup>97</sup> (Markovic, 17 September 2008) section War in South Ossetia

<sup>98</sup> (Dr. Ariel Cohen, June 09, 2011, Accessed on 16FEB2019, pp. 12-14). Control of the pipeline prevents oil delivery from Azerbaijan unless routed through existing pipelines through Russia or Turkey

<sup>99</sup> (U.S. Department of Defense, June 14, 2002). DoD Fact sheet from 2002 lists Georgia as providing these

<sup>100</sup> (Europe, Radio Liberty), MAP was not agreed to at the Summit with disagreement coming from the Germans and Americans, but a commitment for a process forward was assured.

the future.<sup>101</sup> The Kosovo declaration of independence saw renewed Russian fears of expansionism in their sphere of influence and simultaneously prompted Russian calls for independence in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>102</sup> The resulting war in Georgia presented the region with a highly consequential new security concern.

The conflict showcased immediate differences of opinion relating to different viewpoints concerning threat perception. The European Union commissioned an “independent” investigation of the war.<sup>103</sup> The European Union investigation concluded that while both parties were partly to blame, it was Georgia that started the confrontation.<sup>104</sup> The results prompted some NATO MS like Germany, to have concerns of who was the instigator of the conflict.<sup>105</sup> If the results were held to be true, then MS might hold different threat perceptions. If a MS did not believe Russia was an instigator, then the threat perception would be less than MS who did. The report focused on the specific actions from August 7-8, 2008, however the EU report downplayed such key aspects as: the build-up of Russian military forces on the Georgian border prior to the conflict, and addressing whether a state has the right to self-defense in the face of an imminent military threat.<sup>106</sup> As a result, the investigation was debated and prompted various responses as to whom the guilty party was in starting the conflict.<sup>107</sup> Testimony provided in the United States House report on the matter found several concerning details: Russian peacekeepers were not in

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<sup>101</sup> (Europe, Radio Liberty).

<sup>102</sup> (Staff E. , Aug 28th 2008)

<sup>103</sup> (Report F. F., September 2009) Introduction Section

<sup>104</sup> (Report F. F., September 2009, p. 20); official EU Council commissioned fact-finding report.

<sup>105</sup> (Valasek, August 2008)

<sup>106</sup> (Heritage, September 30, 2009)

<sup>107</sup> (Hudson, Oct 1, 2009); news article calls into question which side prompted the conflict.



approved locations/positions, recent Russian military exercise scenario had been an accurate dress rehearsal to the invasion into Georgia, Russian military had recently violated international airspace and brazenly proclaimed it as a “warning”, in 2007, the Russians had conducted aerial attacks in Abkhazia, and the Russians had refused multiple calls from a coalition of international countries in June 2008, to come to the negotiating table to avoid military confrontation.<sup>108</sup>

## **The Response of NATO**

### **Statements as Policy Outputs**

In the year preceding military action in Georgia, Russia and NATO were actively engaged in dialogue and exploring partnerships in their main vehicle for talks, the NATO-Russia Council.<sup>109</sup> Disagreements concerning the events in Georgia were publicly acknowledged as were agreements during regular meetings, joint statements, and press conferences as a result of the NATO-Russia Council.<sup>110</sup> In a 2007 press conference, the NATO Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer stated after a bilateral meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov about the absence of Georgian involvement in NATO:

It is clear that a decision, if any, on NATO enlargement, or of the phases leading to NATO enlargement, be it Membership Action Plan, be it Intensified Dialogue, will be taken by the 26 allies...<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> (Hearing, Serial Number 110-221)

<sup>109</sup> (Council N. R., April, 26 2007)

<sup>110</sup> (Council N. R., April, 26 2007); disagreements over air defense, CFE Treaty etc.

<sup>111</sup> (Council N.-R. , NATO-Russia Council Chairman's Press Conference, FEB2007)

NATO enlargement in the time period immediately preceding Russian aggression was not a forgone conclusion nor was it out of the realm of possibility. In a speech in 2007 at the Tbilisi State University, then NATO Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer notably outlined:

The door to NATO membership is open today, and it will remain open in the future... But let me also stress two other things... And second, that no country which is not a member of NATO has a veto or “droit de regard” over NATO enlargement decisions...<sup>112</sup>

NATO addressed Georgia at the Bucharest Summit in April 2008. NATO officially “welcomed” the “aspirations” of Georgia for becoming a member of NATO and provided “support” for the next step of applying for a Membership Action Plan, thus denying the Georgians a MAP as a result of the Summit.<sup>113</sup> Near the end of the Summit declaration, Items #42 and #43 addressed Russian activities in the area. Citing “the persistence of regional conflicts” and “continued support of the territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty of... Georgia,” the summit declaration stops short of condemnation of Russian aggression in the region.<sup>114</sup>

In June 2008, the NATO-Russia Council met at the ministerial level, and did not have a press conference; instead, the NRC published a short statement citing areas of cooperation in missile defense, the ongoing international War on Terror, and combating drug traffickers.<sup>115</sup> Notably absent was any mention of Georgia, even after NATO press releases from the Secretary General of NATO had condemned Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> (Scheffer, 2007)

<sup>113</sup> (Council H. o., 3 April 2008 )

<sup>114</sup> (Council H. o., 3 April 2008 )

<sup>115</sup> (Council N.-R. , Press Release NRC, JUN2008)

<sup>116</sup> (Statement N. S., APR2008); Official statement by NATO Secretary General on Russian recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

Activities continued as normal between Russia and NATO, with Russia participating in a NATO and partner state disaster relief exercise.<sup>117</sup> As a result of Russian aggression in August 2008, the NRC did not meet again until December 2009.

The North Atlantic Council met at the ministerial level and quickly produced a press release detailing the council's consensus on the matter on 19 August 2008.<sup>118</sup> The following key statements from the document detail the organizations approach to the matter.

The North Atlantic Council met in special Ministerial session on 19 August 2008, expressed its grave concern over the situation in Georgia... A peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict in Georgia must be based on full respect for the principles of Georgia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity recognised by international law and UN Security Council resolutions... We remain concerned by Russia's actions during this crisis... Russian military action has been disproportionate and inconsistent with its peacekeeping role, as well as incompatible with the principles of peaceful conflict resolution set out in the Helsinki Final Act, the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the Rome Declaration...<sup>119</sup>

The official statement from NATO as a result of the military actions in Georgia was to “express their grave concern over the situation.”<sup>120</sup> The statement called for an end to the violence and was careful to avoid outright condemnation of either party while citing aid given to Georgia and acknowledgment of “disproportionate” responses from Russia.<sup>121</sup> However, diplomacy between NATO and Russia was only temporarily halted as a result of the aggression. In December 2008, the chairman of the NRC, the Secretary General of NATO, traveled to Russia to meet with the Russian President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin. The concluding press release of the

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<sup>117</sup> (Exercise, June 2008). The large scale exercise continued even with ongoing tensions due to focus placement on disaster relief

<sup>118</sup> (Council N. N., Issued on 19 Aug. 2008)

<sup>119</sup> (Ministers, 19 Aug. 2008)

<sup>120</sup> (Ministers, 19 Aug. 2008)

<sup>121</sup> (Ministers, 19 Aug. 2008)

meeting did mention that the “security situation in Georgia” was discussed but did not list condemnation of the events or that any conversations had occurred on the subject.<sup>122</sup>

### **Force Posture of NATO**

The force posture of NATO remained largely unchanged in response to Russian intrusions into Georgia. A NATO Partnership for Peace training exercise, Immediate Response, took place in July 2008.<sup>123</sup> The exercise was unrelated to the actions between Russia and Georgia. The training was focused on security cooperation and building the partnership between Georgia and the United States.<sup>124</sup> In 2009, Georgia was host to a very similar NATO training exercise, which while provocative in Russia was similar to the previous year’s exercise and did not appear to be as a result of the Russian aggression in 2008.<sup>125</sup> Several changes in force posture were instead happening at the civilian level within NATO, as several programs intended to help the Ministry of Defense of Georgia were introduced in the areas of procurement and civilian defense training.<sup>126</sup> The largest change in NATO forces was created on the civilian and institutional side instead of the military. The NATO-Georgia Commission created in 2008, was introduced at the ministerial level.<sup>127</sup> The official purpose of the NGC was “to serve as a forum

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<sup>122</sup> (Release N. P., 16 Dec. 2009)

<sup>123</sup> (Staff R. , July 15, 2008)

<sup>124</sup> Ibid

<sup>125</sup> (Barry, May 10, 2009)

<sup>126</sup> (NATO, 14 Sep. 2018)

<sup>127</sup> (Release N.-G. C., 04 December 2012)

for political consultations and practical cooperation to help Georgia achieve its goal of membership in NATO.”<sup>128</sup>

### **NATO Economic Measures as Policy Outputs**

In the immediate aftermath of Russian aggression, there were no major exercise infrastructure building projects by NATO. Economic aid was provided by many countries, including the United States, several EU states, and Japan. While aid from the Americans and Japanese was given at the bilateral level, the European states convened a meeting in 2009 at the European Union level in Brussels to deliver a multilaterally built economic aid package by the European Commission.<sup>129</sup> Other international organizations that gave economic aid included the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD.)<sup>130</sup> Most noticeable was the absence of funding for military related purchases. The funding instead focused on humanitarian aid and reconstruction efforts.<sup>131</sup>

### **US Policy Output Responses**

The United States during the 2000s under the presidency of George Bush was the strongest advocate for the government of the Republic of Georgia to attain NATO membership.<sup>132</sup> Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Georgia had been one of the

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<sup>128</sup> (Release N.-G. C., 04 December 2012)

<sup>129</sup> (Bruckner, 2011, pp. 49-50)

<sup>130</sup> (Bruckner, 2011)

<sup>131</sup> (Otarashvili, May, 2013) However, this view is split in the literature as Till Bruckner notes in pg 49-52, there was considerable push from the Americans to have aid have more of a dual purpose, while at the Europeans were “less trusting” of the government.

<sup>132</sup> (Sloan, 2016)

United States staunchest allies in the War on Terror, with thousands of soldiers deployed with allied forces.<sup>133</sup> In the immediate reaction to the invasion of the Russians, the United States flew 2,000 Georgia soldiers on US transport planes from Iraq back to Tblisi, Georgia.<sup>134</sup> The United States in the abrupt aftermath was also the largest provider of economic assistance with a pledge immediately following the conflict of \$1 billion dollars in aid.<sup>135</sup> Some of the various forms of economic aid would soon arrive on US military transport vessels, much to the chagrin of the Russians.<sup>136</sup> The United States provided these responses unilaterally, in addition to support provided by NATO multilaterally.

### **US Statements**

The United States at the time of the Russian invasion of Georgia called for an end to violence. Absent an outright condemnation of Russian activities, President Bush's response was the western world's most critical of Russian activities in the region:

Georgia is a sovereign state and its territorial integrity must be respected... We call for an end to the Russian bombings, and a return by the parties to the status quo of August the 6<sup>th</sup>... Russia has invaded a sovereign neighboring state and threatens a democratic government elected by its people. Such an action is unacceptable in the 21st century.<sup>137</sup>

The US policy remained similar through the transition between President George W. Bush to President Barrack Obama, in July 2009 while looking to advance and reset the

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<sup>133</sup> (Georgia, 2019)

<sup>134</sup> (Nichol, Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008:, March 3, 2009, pp. 28-31)

<sup>135</sup> (Bruckner, 2011)

<sup>136</sup> (Kramer, 28 Aug 2008: A16. )

<sup>137</sup> (Bush, 11AUG2008)

relationship with Russia, President Obama's press office also sent a clear message regarding its policy in relation to Georgia.<sup>138</sup>

The Obama Administration continues to have serious disagreements with the Russian government over Georgia. We continue to call for Russia to end its occupation of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and in parallel have worked with the Russian government to prevent further military escalations in the region... and continue to press for the strengthening of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanisms and a return of international observers to the two occupied regions of Georgia.<sup>139</sup>

### **US Force Posture Policy Outputs**

The United States had training programs in Georgia prior to the Russian aggression, such as a "Georgia Train and Equip Program (GTEP)" started in 2002, which was centered on training forces for the War on Terror.<sup>140</sup> The immediate aftermath of the Russian aggression brought the arrival of US transport equipment for redeployment of personnel from Iraq and the transport of humanitarian aid. However, these movements of personnel and equipment were temporary in nature and did not include lethal support. In the immediate aftermath of the conflict there was no large-scale change to training missions. The US did provide the majority support for a NATO training mission named the "Georgian Deployment Program," which was started in 2009.<sup>141</sup> The goal of the program was focused on providing training and certification for Georgian battalions deploying to Afghanistan as part of NATO.<sup>142</sup> A small naval exercise the following year involving one US ship, immediately drew a hostile response from Russia and was indicative of

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<sup>138</sup> (Secretary P. O., June 24, 2010). Statement from President Obama Press Secretary

<sup>139</sup> (Secretary P. O., June 24, 2010)

<sup>140</sup> (Georgia, 2019). (Department, February 1, 2003).

<sup>141</sup> (Office E. P.)

<sup>142</sup> Ibid

the small change to training exercises in the region.<sup>143</sup> Large training exercises as a result of the conflict were not planned, and the exercises that did take place were consistent with a focus on the War on Terror.

## **US Policy Outputs in Economic Matters**

The US provided the largest economic response to the Russian aggression, with a total pledged package of \$1 billion dollars in aid.<sup>144</sup> However, the pledged package was implemented over the course of several years, with FY2009 foreign assistance totaling only \$312 million dollars.<sup>145</sup> The aid was provided promptly and included medical supplies and reconstruction funds outside of resourcing the supplies transport.<sup>146</sup> Noticeable in the immediate timeframe of the conflict was what was not sent:

- No funding for combat troops; the military only provided transport for the redeployment of Georgian troops and for humanitarian supplies
- No immediate funding or resupplying military forces
- Military sales of lethal aid were not provided: the focus was instead on “small arms, communications, and medical gear<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> (Dzhindzikhvili, 2009)

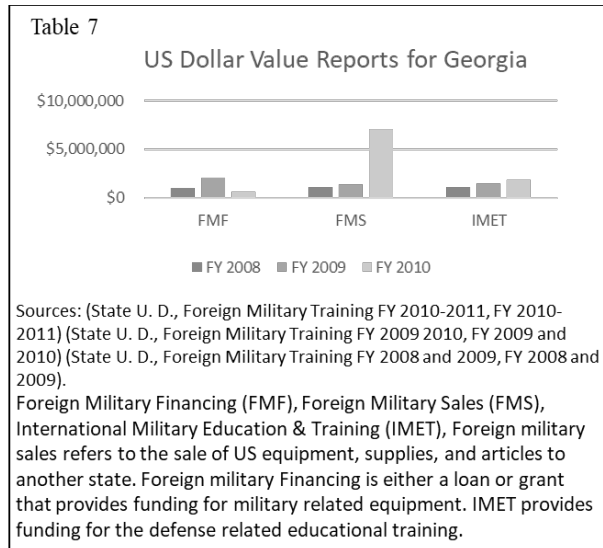
<sup>144</sup> (Rice, August 8, 2018).

<sup>145</sup> (Nichol, Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests , September 23, 2010 , p. 7)

<sup>146</sup> (Release W. H., 13 Aug 2008. )

<sup>147</sup> (Nichol, Georgia [Republic]: Recent Developments and U.S. Interests , September 23, 2010 , pp. 8-9)





There was an increase in military training expenditures from FY2008 through FY2010. Foreign military financing increased from FY 2008-FY2009, but a drop in FY 2010. The largest factor appears to be foreign military sales of equipment with an increase to over \$7 million dollars in FY 2010.

### German Policy Outputs

Compared to France, the UK, the US, and the EU, Germany showed a delayed response to the Russian-Georgian War as indicated in Table 8. The European Council presidency was held by France in August 2008, and French President Sarkozy took a leading role at the time of the aggression.<sup>148</sup> For Germany, Russia was a large trading power with significant resource ties that grew stronger in the following months.<sup>149</sup> A geopolitical decision that antagonized or endangered the economic relationship between the two countries would have created a political

<sup>148</sup> (Beauregard, Volume 38, 2016 - Issue 4)

<sup>149</sup> (Kulish, Dec 2, 2008)

concern in Germany.<sup>150</sup> The relatively weak responses, have been argued by some to be a form of weak appeasement in order not to offend a large trading partner.<sup>151</sup> The German government for years had been in discussion in relation to a gas pipeline directly linking with Russia.<sup>152</sup> Germany's position was consistent with its position at the NATO Bucharest Summit earlier in the same year, when it opposed a MAP for Georgia.<sup>153</sup>

### Statements as Policy Outputs

Table 8 Policy Example Timelines for Georgia

	FRANCE	GERMANY	UK	EU COUNCIL	US
Support GA Territorial Integrity	8 August	15 August	11 August	11 August	11 August
Demand Russian Withdrawal	9 August	15 August	21 August	13 August	13 August
Condemn Russian Actions	17 August	15 August	11 August	-	11 August
Source: (Beauregard, Volume 38, 2016 - Issue 4)					

Chancellor Merkel's first response to Russian aggression was on 15 August 2008. It was most notable for the location from which the response was given, in Moscow at a joint press conference with Russian leadership.

And I said very clearly that of course it is always a great pity when there are victims and here unfortunately there are many, many victims, but that even when you take into account Russia's description of the situation, I would still say that Russia's reaction has been disproportionate, and that the presence of military forces in the very heart of Georgian territory is wrong.<sup>154</sup>

<sup>150</sup> (Larsen, Volume 21, 2012 - Issue 1)

<sup>151</sup> (Giurcanu, Published online: 10 September 2013 )

<sup>152</sup> (Newnham, Volume 2, Issue 2, July 2011, Pages 134-143)

<sup>153</sup> (Europe, Radio Liberty)

<sup>154</sup> (Conference, August 15, 2008)

The combination of the lateness of the statement by the German Chancellor and the location where the statement was made is evidence of the German response to the conflict. Furthermore, the role of the military did not seem to be an option from the beginning, with the German Foreign Minister in 2008 stating that the focus was on “how we could quickly and effectively deliver humanitarian aid.”<sup>155</sup> While a call for an immediate ceasefire was made by many German politicians, the sentiments of who was at fault and relief of Georgia not being a NATO member were apparent.<sup>156</sup>

The response from the German government in August 2008 was soon followed by the next meeting of Angela Merkel in Moscow, in October 2008. According to one press account, the meeting was conducted in Moscow to “mend ties.”<sup>157</sup> However, the meeting between the two countries also included meetings between major energy companies, signing key trade agreements related to energy, and talks over the gas pipeline Nordstream.<sup>158</sup>

### **German Force Posture Changes**

Germany was not conducting military training exercises in a bilateral fashion with the Georgians inside or outside of the country prior to the war. There was no support provided to the NATO sponsored exercise in 2008, prior to the start of the conflict.<sup>159</sup> No German transporters were reported to have been used, nor were they offered for providing assistance in the immediate

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<sup>155</sup> (Beauregard, Volume 38, 2016 - Issue 4)

<sup>156</sup> (Stelzenmüller, August 13, 2008)

<sup>157</sup> (Shchedrov, OCT 2nd, 2008)

<sup>158</sup> Ibid

<sup>159</sup> (Nichol, Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008:, March 3, 2009)

aftermath of the war. The largest change in force posture policy outputs for the Germans was made with civilian forces through its commitment with the European Union. The European Union responded with an EU Monitoring Mission in 2008 for which Germany played a role and committed funds.<sup>160</sup>

### **German Economic Measures as Policy Outputs**

In the immediate aftermath of the war in Georgia, German economic responses were most notable for the absence of policy outputs. A total of over 33 million euros was allocated for humanitarian purposes, paling in comparison to other large donors like the United States or the World Bank.<sup>161</sup> The largest evidence of economic measures were the financial agreements made between Germany and Russia in October 2008 and the continuation of planning for the Nordstream pipeline.<sup>162</sup> Planning and preparations for more economic cooperation rather than any sort of sanction, embargo, or economic support delivered to Georgia was the preferred option for Germany.<sup>163</sup>

### **Analysis of Policy Outputs from the Perspective of NATO as an Alliance**

Support to the key attribute of maximizing power capabilities related to NATO as an alliance finds inconsistent evidence. Exercises were introduced after the conflict, but statements and fact sheets indicate that the exercises were planned prior to the conflict. An increase was noted in military related sales and educational training by the Americans. However, the training

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<sup>160</sup> (Larsen, Volume 21, 2012 - Issue 1)

<sup>161</sup> ((jc), Accessed on 16FEB2019)

<sup>162</sup> (Shchedrov, OCT 2nd, 2008)

<sup>163</sup> (Newnham, Volume 2, Issue 2, July 2011, Pages 134-143)

specifically did not include lethal aid and no combat support was provided. Evidence from Germany demonstrate a lack of policy outputs to increase FP.

In evaluating the through the framework of NATO as an organization there was consistent evidence found. The NGC was created and provided strong evidence for deepening an existing partnership with a special relationship. German policy responses are consistent with a preference for the EU taking a large role. The US increased support for defense reform education and provided statements that indicated preference for a multilateral approach to a peaceful resolution. Preplanned exercises were continued as planned and performed under the joint military command structure of NATO. Together the responses specify support for both ‘interdependent rules-based cooperation’ and ‘centralization & independence’.

The framework found the evidence was inconsistent in applying the policy outputs to the framework of NATO as a community. Statements issued from NATO were suggestive of concern, but not calls for decisive responses. Statements from the influential MS of Germany and the United States did not indicate consistency with shared identity. The statements from President’s Bush and Obama spoke of ‘invading’ or ‘occupying’ actions from the Russians. The statements from Chancellor Merkel labeled the aggression as merely ‘wrong’. Furthermore, the evidence points to a differing threat perception. Questions over who started the war, indicated that the events were not viewed equally amongst the influential MS. Key evidence was the gap between the policy outputs of the US and other actors. A preference was shown for bilateral options in response, versus that of an expected multilateral shared norms response.

Table 9 Policy Outputs in the Case of Georgia

	POLICY OUTPUTS		
	NATO	US	Germany
Key Attribute of NATO as an alliance: Maximizing Power Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exercises after conflict were preplanned prior to events</li> <li>- No NATO combat support / Troops provided</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase in Military Sales</li> <li>- Increase in IMET funding</li> <li>- No funding for lethal aid</li> <li>- Used transports to deliver Georgian forces back; but no US combat support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No increase in military sales</li> <li>- No increase in force power</li> <li>- No evidence to help build Georgian capabilities</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #1 NATO as an Organization: Interdependent Rules Based Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Creation of the NGC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increases in Defense reform education</li> <li>- Support for OSCE in the peace process</li> <li>- Statement of support for deepening cooperation with NATO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support existed; but for non-NATO actions such as EU setting the tone for statements, running an investigation</li> <li>- Helped staff and fund an EUMM</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #2 NATO as an Organization: Centralization & Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training continued for WoT with NATO forces</li> <li>- SEC GEN Meeting in Russia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training exercises after aggression were centralized under NATO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of evidence with regards to NATO</li> <li>- Evidence indicating an independent EU response</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #1 NATO as a Community: Shared Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statements indicated “preferences”, but were not indicative of policy responses. i.e. concern versus that of suggesting there would be a price to be paid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- President Bush referred to the event as an “invasion”. President Obama said that Russia was “occupying” Georgia</li> <li>- Large Aid package given</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chancellor Merkel first described the Russian actions as “wrong”</li> <li>- Business actions continued as normal</li> <li>- Smaller aid package 1/10 of US was given for support</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #2 NATO as a Community: Shared Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The creation of the NGC provided a new type of forum not previously seen in NATO</li> <li>- MS sought multiple options for dealing with the conflict</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The US provided large support bilaterally to Georgia</li> <li>- Continued support for NATO training programs already established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Germany policy outputs were not consistent that NATO was MS acted with shared norms</li> <li>- The preferred route was through the EU for resolution</li> </ul>

## **CHAPTER 4: A CASE STUDY OF NATO, US, AND GERMAN POLICY OUTPUTS AS A RESULT OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE**

The main objective of this case study is to introduce policy outputs as a result of the Russian aggression in the Ukraine in 2014. In doing so, the case study will also offer a limited historical background that will lead to a better understanding of the policy output evidence provided. The key actors in the case study will remain NATO, the United States, and Germany. Policy outputs will be measured chronologically by actor in a similar structure of statements, force posture policies, and policies related to economics such as sanctions and aid provided.

### **An Introduction to Russian Military Action in the Ukraine in 2014**

The relationship between Ukraine and Russia has been complicated since the collapse of the Soviet Union. A large section of Ukraine prior to the conflict spoke Russian, and cultural ties related to religion and the history within the Soviet Union indicate a strong connection between the two states.<sup>164</sup> Security challenges were apparent in the relationship between Ukraine and Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union. In 1994, Ukraine gave up a nuclear arsenal established during Soviet Union times: Ukraine had signed the Budapest Memorandum alongside the UK, the US, and Russia, which provided assurances from Russia that the territorial integrity of Ukraine would be upheld.<sup>165</sup> The dissolution of the Soviet Union also presented challenges relating to military bases. The Ukrainian town of Sevastopol housed a naval harbor and other

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<sup>164</sup> (Mankoff, January 8, 2009).

<sup>165</sup> (Yost D. , 91:3, p. 4)

bases in the region, providing Russia access to the Black Sea.<sup>166</sup> Ukraine in the late 1990s leased these bases and harbors to Russia. The lead up to the acts of aggression by Russia, can be partly traced back to economics and spheres of influence, with Russia pursuing a new relationship with Ukraine in the Eurasian Economic Union, and concurrently trying to end an economic deal between Ukraine and the European Union.<sup>167</sup>

Prior to the conflict, Ukraine also maintained a relationship with NATO. A long-established Partner for Peace, Ukraine was also a partner that was afforded the special relationship of having a dedicated NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC).<sup>168</sup> Ukraine during a period of increased troubles with Russia in relation to resources, applied for NATO membership in January 2008.<sup>169</sup> The decision was ultimately denied in the April 2008 NATO summit, due to several countries, such as Germany, not wanting to extend membership.<sup>170</sup> However, interdependency ties strengthened between Ukraine and NATO, with the alliance funding an annual review process: the Annual National Program. This program provided a plan and support for help in achieving defense reform objectives in 2009. Another program aimed to provide education for defense professionals was called the Defense Education Enhancement Program (DEEP).<sup>171</sup> The relationship with NATO prior to the conflict can then best be described as a close partnership, with a special commission, and a relationship that was strengthening with

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<sup>166</sup> (F. Stephen Larrabee P. A., 2015, pp. 29-30)

<sup>167</sup> (Wolczuk, May 2017 , p. 11)

<sup>168</sup> (Ukraine, Last updated: 14 Jun. 2018). Fact Sheet from NATO

<sup>169</sup> (Aslund, 2015-04-15, p. 77) George Bush also pushed for NATO membership for Ukraine, other states, including Germany were not in favor.

<sup>170</sup> (Europe, Radio Liberty)

<sup>171</sup> (Ukraine, Last updated: 14 Jun. 2018)



more programs being added and an assurance from the 2008 Summit declaration for eventual membership.<sup>172</sup>

Security relationships between the United States and Ukraine likewise existed prior to the conflict. The United States had established a program for military cooperation and bilateral training in the State Partnership Program, with California being Ukraine's "partner" since 1993.<sup>173</sup> The US had also taken a lead role in training exercises within Ukraine, seeing security cooperation in events like Operation Peace Shield which began in the mid-1990s.<sup>174</sup> Ukraine had also started shifting its military to a more modern capability favored by NATO and American forces. Ukraine was sending soldiers and leaders to American training programs throughout the 2000s.<sup>175</sup> The relationship had also changed following 2008, with the deployment of Ukrainian personnel to Afghanistan in support of the War on Terror.<sup>176</sup> Based on these programs, it is apparent that there was an existing security cooperation prior to the start of the conflict.

The relationship between Germany and Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union was not as strong in military cooperation as were ties with the Americans. However, the Germans did take part in NATO exercises in which Ukrainians took part, such as Rapid Trident. The ties were closely related to trade and to resources such as energy. Germany had long established bilateral ties with a 'High Level Working Group focused on economic issues' since 2005.<sup>177</sup> Chancellor

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<sup>172</sup> (Europe, Radio Liberty)

<sup>173</sup> (Hughes, July 11, 2016)

<sup>174</sup> (Polyakov, 2004, p. 108. 40.)

<sup>175</sup> (Sanders, *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 21: 599–614, 2008 , p. 604)

<sup>176</sup> (Relations, 2009). The deployment of a small number of Ukrainian forces was continued through the following years as well.

<sup>177</sup> (Office G. F., 04.01.2019)

Merkel in 2007 had worked to establish a free trade zone with Ukraine: but the Germans did not identify any date or further actions/summits/statements that indicated support for eventual EU membership. However, perhaps the most importance fact prior to the conflict with Russia, was the Nordstream pipeline. Disagreements between Russia and Ukraine over the flow of gas and other geopolitical matters, partly led to the decision for the building of the controversial pipeline to Germany that bypasses Ukraine altogether.<sup>178</sup>

## **Key Events**

The policy outputs will focus on the responses to Russian action in Ukraine 2014. The events were undoubtedly a result of a multitude of factors. However, for brevity the background will begin with the protests that resulted after then Ukrainian President Yanukovych did not sign a key economic agreement with the EU.<sup>179</sup> The ‘Euromaidan’ started in November 2013, and steadily grew in the face of a violent response from the Ukrainian government.<sup>180</sup> In February, the events turned deadlier and in the face of an increasing movement and international opposition, Yanukovych fled.<sup>181</sup> Russia responded to these events by sending military forces into Crimea.<sup>182</sup> Following the annexation and ‘referendum’, Russia backed separatists started fighting in Eastern Ukraine in April.<sup>183</sup> International outcry over the Russian aggression grew stronger in

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<sup>178</sup> (Statement B. , 6 September 2011). BBC Article outlining the pipeline

<sup>179</sup> (TOL, Transitions Online)

<sup>180</sup> (Morelli, February 22, 2016)

<sup>181</sup> (TOL, Transitions Online)

<sup>182</sup> (Morelli, February 22, 2016)

<sup>183</sup> (TOL, Transitions Online)

the face of Russian denials of support, and the shooting down of a civilian airliner on 17 July.<sup>184</sup>

A preliminary peace accord was reached in September, known as the Minsk protocol.<sup>185</sup>

However, the fighting persisted in Ukraine while Russia continued to deny the backing of separatists in the region.<sup>186</sup> A second ceasefire was negotiated and signed on February 11 2015, and sporadic fighting has continued.<sup>187</sup>

The focus is on the policy outputs of NATO and its key member states of Germany and the United States. Therefore, the case study identifies key moments of the conflict in order to analyze the policy outputs chronologically. The events will only focus on key dates for the evidence that will be presented in this chapter relating to policy outputs from NATO, Germany, and the United States.<sup>188</sup>

- 22 November 2013, Ukrainian government announces it will not sign AA with EU
- November 2013, Protestors 'take to the streets' over refusal to sign deal with EU
- 18 February 2014, Protestors clash with government forces
- 22 February 2014, President Yanukovich dismissed
- 26 February 2014, NATO Ministers of Defense Meet
- 2 March 2014, Russia send troops to Crimea
- 3 March 2014, Russia announces plan to build a bridge between Crimea and Russian Taman peninsula
- 4 March 2014, NAC Meeting on Ukraine
- 16 March 2014, Referendum vote held in Crimea
- 10 April 2014, NATO release images of Russians in Eastern Ukraine
- 26 May 2014, Poroshenko wins election
- 27 June 2014, EU signs economic agreements with Ukraine
- 17 July 2014, Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 shot down over Eastern Ukraine
- 4-5 September 2014, The NATO Wales Summit

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<sup>184</sup> (TOL, Transitions Online)

<sup>185</sup> Ibid

<sup>186</sup> (Morelli, February 22, 2016)

<sup>187</sup> (Morelli, February 22, 2016)

<sup>188</sup> (Timeline, Accessed on 28FEB2019.) (TOL, Transitions Online) (Staff B. , Accessed on 17FEB2019. ) The timeline is a collaboration of figures and key dates from the above timelines.

- 5 September 2014, Minsk Protocol signed that indicated ceasefire supervised by the OSCE
- 9 November 2014, Fighting resumes in Eastern Ukraine between separatists and Ukrainian government
- 11 February 2015, Minsk II signed <sup>189</sup>

## NATO Policy Outputs

NATO policy outputs in the form of statements were put out promptly, in some instances on the same day of action. When ‘little green men’ appeared in Crimea, the NUC met the same day and NATO Secretary General Rasmussen said:

...This morning’s action by an armed group is dangerous and irresponsible. I urge Russia not to take any action that could escalate tension or create misunderstanding... <sup>190</sup>

The Secretary General was also the first to issue a statement following the announcement of the actions in Crimea. The statement was strongly worded and was a precursor to meetings that would soon take place within the NAC.

...I have convened the North Atlantic Council today because of Russia’s military action in Ukraine. And because of President Putin’s threats against this sovereign nation. What Russia is doing now in Ukraine violates the principles of the United Nations Charter. It threatens peace and security in Europe. Russia must stop its military activities and its threats... <sup>191</sup>

The following statement by the NAC after its joint session set the stakes even higher;

The North Atlantic Council condemns the Russian Federation’s military escalation in Crimea and expresses its grave concern regarding the authorisation by the Russian Parliament to use the armed forces of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine. Military action against Ukraine by forces of the Russian Federation is a breach of

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<sup>189</sup> (Timeline, Accessed on 28FEB2019.) (TOL, Transitions Online) (Staff B. , Accessed on 17FEB2019. ) The timeline is a collaboration of figures and key dates from the above timelines.

<sup>190</sup> (Statement N. , Last Updated 27 FEB 2014). NUC Statement 27FEB2014.

<sup>191</sup> (Rasmussen, 02 Mar. 2014). Speech prior to meeting with NAC on Russian annexation of Crimea

international law and contravenes the principles of the NATO-Russia Council and the Partnership for Peace...<sup>192</sup>

Following the ‘referendum’ in Crimea,<sup>193</sup> The NAC again released a statement;

We consider the so-called referendum held on 16 March in Ukraine’s Autonomous Republic of Crimea to be both illegal and illegitimate... We urge the Russian Federation to de-escalate the situation, including by ceasing all military activities against Ukraine...<sup>194</sup>

The NATO-Ukraine Commission continued to meet amidst ongoing military actions inside of Ukraine. In April, the group met at the foreign minister level. The resulting press statement continued NATO’s policy and provided a clue as to the future of policy outputs:

We do not recognize Russia’s illegal and illegitimate “annexation” of Crimea... We call on Russia to de-escalate by reducing its troops in Crimea to pre-crisis levels and withdrawing them to their bases; to reduce its military activities along the Ukrainian border; to reverse the illegal and illegitimate “annexation” of Crimea... We support the deployment of an OSCE monitoring mission to Ukraine... NATO and Ukraine will intensify cooperation and promote defence reforms through capacity building and capability development programmes... We welcome Ukraine’s signature of the political chapters of the Association Agreement with the European Union on 21 March...<sup>195</sup>

The next meeting of the NUC occurred at the Wales NATO summit in September. Much of the rhetoric of the resulting meeting mirrored that of the Wales Summit declaration. The policy output of the declaration was upfront and could not be misinterpreted. The ‘aggressive acts’ by Russia were called out in the first point of the declaration.<sup>196</sup> The Wales summit was largely about Russia and Ukraine, highlighted by the fact that NATO members invited President

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<sup>192</sup> (North Atlantic Council, Issued on 02MAR2014)

<sup>193</sup> Does not imply legitimacy of referendum, only the actions put forth by the government of Russia

<sup>194</sup> (Council N. A., Issued on 17MAR2014). NAC Statement on referendum

<sup>195</sup> (Statement N. , Last Updated 27 FEB 2014)

<sup>196</sup> (Declaration, Press Release (2014) 120)

Poroshenko of Ukraine as a guest to the event and convened a meeting of the NUC.<sup>197</sup>

Noticeably absent, was an invitation to any Russian representatives to the summit.<sup>198</sup> However, the declaration as a result of the alliance's work at the summit brought about large policy responses introduced for the first time:<sup>199</sup>

- Point 5 introduced the 'Readiness Action Plan', a comprehensive package that addressed the new security environment
- Point 8 highlighted changes to the NATO Response Force (NRF,) with the creation of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF)
- Point 13, highlighted the need for more exercises to combat the hybrid warfare threat
- Point 15 pledged military expenditures that amounted to 2 percent spending of GDP with a plan to spend at least 20 percent on major equipment purchases

### **NATO Changes to Force Posture**

Much of the force posture seen in Eastern Europe today was set in place by the measures adopted by the NATO members in the Wales summit. However, the changes were not without debate. Poland and the Baltic states pushed for a heavier troop presence and presence of American troops for a response to the Russian aggression.<sup>200</sup> The Wales summit did set in place powerful changes to the force posture of NATO. The NRF grew in number to 40,000 soldiers,

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<sup>197</sup> (Mills, International Affairs and Defence section)

<sup>198</sup> (Gruschko, 2014)

<sup>199</sup> (Declaration, Press Release (2014) 120)

<sup>200</sup> (F. Stephen Larrabee S. P., 2017, pp. 30-34), the request for two heavy brigades equated to nearly 10,000 Soldiers

almost three times its previous strength.<sup>201</sup> A multi-national and rotational air-policing mission with fighter jets in the Baltics, also deployed to Romania and to Poland.<sup>202</sup> A new 5,000 soldier VJTF with ability to deploy within five days was created.<sup>203</sup> Other changes in force posture included new Airborne Early Warning and Control System (AWACs) deployments, naval patrols, increased activity in the Black Sea area and counter-mining operations.<sup>204</sup> Also created were NATO Force Integration Units (NFIUs), which are teams of up to 40 personnel designed to facilitate logistics across various countries in eastern Europe.<sup>205</sup> Along with the NFIUs, there was the formation of new command and control ‘Headquarters’ units in Romania, increasing the ‘capabilities’ of the Multinational Corps Northeast Headquarters in Poland, and the decision to create a new headquarters designed for logistics.<sup>206</sup> The result in the immediate aftermath of Russian aggression was decisive and provided fast policy outputs in the form of changes in force posture at the multilateral level.

### **NATO Economic Related Policy Outputs**

The policy outputs of NATO associated to economic matters, primarily narrated the creation and expenses of the new force posture composed as a result of the Wales Summit. However, the consensus was clear in Wales by proclaiming in point 19 of the summit declaration

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<sup>201</sup> (Arnold, Spring 2016, p. 79.)

<sup>202</sup> (RAP, February 2016)

<sup>203</sup> (F. Stephen Larrabee S. P., 2017, p. 32)

<sup>204</sup> (RAP, February 2016)

<sup>205</sup> (Arnold, Spring 2016)

<sup>206</sup> (RAP, February 2016)

that ‘we support sanctions imposed by the European Union, G7, and others.’<sup>207</sup> In addition to supporting sanctions, NATO established several trust funds with different lead states aimed at different areas of support to Ukraine. Those funds, which collectively manage over 5 million euros, include Command, Control, Communications, and Computers (C4); Logistics and Standardization; Cyber Defense, Military Career Transition, Medical Rehabilitation; and Disposal of Radioactive Waste.<sup>208</sup>

The largest economic response by NATO related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine was the formal commitment by MS to two percent defense spending as a percentage of GDP and the 20 percent goal of new equipment purchases. The goals addressed an existing burden-sharing gap in the alliance. At the time of implementation only four NATO members were meeting the two percent of GDP guideline.<sup>209</sup> The new guidelines did not address all of the burden-sharing issues. For instance, Greece was already nearly meeting the goals prior to Wales and Denmark was not, but John Deni suggests the Danes were able to deploy forces better to support missions instead of concentrating on a regional focus.<sup>210</sup> The MS did signal a renewed look at burden sharing amongst NATO allies directly following the events in Ukraine.

### **American Policy Outputs**

The year 2013 was not a year of increasing cooperation for the governments of the United States and Ukraine in terms of bilateral agreements. The US had openly lobbied for and

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<sup>207</sup> (Declaration, Press Release (2014) 120)

<sup>208</sup> (Report N. T., As of 27SEP2016). Trust Fund Report via NATO

<sup>209</sup> (Sloan, 2016)

<sup>210</sup> (Deni, NATO’s New Trajectories after the Wales Summit , 2014)



was disappointed, along with the European Union, that Ukraine did not agree to the EU Association Agreement relating to free trade.<sup>211</sup> The US had reached out in January 2014, with a phone call from the US Vice-President Joe Biden to the Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych to speak of creating a peaceful end to the ongoing demonstrations.<sup>212</sup> As the situation evolved, the US quickly addressed the matter in a variety of ways to include press statements, speeches, and interviews.

In late February, US President Barack Obama spoke with German Chancellor Angela Merkel about the ongoing events and discuss the way forward for the US, Germany, and the EU in helping to solve the ongoing protests, violence, and political challenges in Ukraine.<sup>213</sup> The conversation took place prior to the annexation of Crimea. In late February, when the crisis was deepening, President Obama expressed that “we are now deeply concerned by reports of military movements taken by the Russian Federation inside of Ukraine.”<sup>214</sup> The statement went further,

Russia has a historic relationship with Ukraine, including cultural and economic ties, and a military facility in Crimea, but any violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity would be deeply destabilizing... It would be a clear violation of Russia’s commitment to respect the independence and sovereignty and borders of Ukraine, and of international laws... And indeed, the United States will stand with the international community in affirming that there will be costs for any military intervention in Ukraine... We will continue to coordinate closely with our European allies. We will continue to communicate directly with the Russian government.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> (Psaki, State Department Press Statement)

<sup>212</sup> (Slack, 2014.)

<sup>213</sup> (Slack, 2014.)

<sup>214</sup> (Obama, Statement by the President on Ukraine, February 28, 2014)

<sup>215</sup> (Obama, Statement by the President on Ukraine, February 28, 2014)

In a special briefing with various press outlets from senior level officials in the Obama White House in early March, the focus was clearly on a multilateral solution to the conflict and a rejection of Russian rationales for the invasion and annexation of Crimea:

Yesterday, you know he [President Obama] was updated by his national security team and spoke separately with President Putin of Russia, Prime Minister Harper of Canada, and President Hollande of France. Today, the President has spoken with Chancellor Merkel of Germany. He'll be – he is either speaking now or will be speaking to Prime Minister Cameron of the United Kingdom and President Komorowski of Poland. The President's point in all of his calls, frankly, has been to underscore the complete illegitimacy of Russia's intervention in Crimea, in Ukraine, and to underscore the support of the United States for Ukraine's territorial integrity and its sovereignty... <sup>216</sup>

Over the next year, more statements from American leadership pointed to the general understanding of the administration's views on Russian forces in Ukraine:

We've seen an illegal referendum in Crimea; an illegitimate move by the Russians to annex Crimea; and dangerous risks of escalation, including threats to Ukrainian personnel in Crimea and threats to southern and eastern Ukraine as well... And because of these choices, the United States is today moving, as we said we would, to impose additional costs on Russia. <sup>217</sup>

Russia is responsible for the violence in eastern Ukraine... The violence is encouraged by Russia. The separatists are trained by Russia. They are armed by Russia. They are funded by Russia. Russia has deliberately and repeatedly violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and the new images of Russian forces inside Ukraine make that plain for the world to see. <sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> (Officials, March 2, 2014)

<sup>217</sup> (Obama, Statement by the President on Ukraine, South Lawn, The White House.)

<sup>218</sup> (Somanader, White House Blog Post)

In 2015, President Obama presented his National Security Strategy and under a subsection of strategy entitle ‘values’, immediately discussed Ukraine.<sup>219</sup> The document outlined US positions as a result of the past years action by Russia in Ukraine:

We will strengthen U.S. and international capacity to prevent conflict among and within states. In the realm of inter-state conflict, Russia’s violation of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity...Russia’s aggression in Ukraine makes clear that European security and the international rules and norms against territorial aggression cannot be taken for granted... We are reassuring our allies by backing our security commitments and increasing responsiveness through training and exercises, as well as a dynamic presence in Central and Eastern Europe to deter further Russian aggression... We will support partners such as Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine so they can better work alongside the United States and NATO, as well as provide for their own defense. And we will continue to impose significant costs on Russia through sanctions and other means while countering Moscow’s deceptive propaganda with the unvarnished truth. We will deter Russian aggression, remain alert to its strategic capabilities, and help our allies and partners resist Russian coercion over the long term, if necessary...<sup>220</sup>

### **American Force Posture Policy Outputs**

The force posture changes American leadership made in connection with the Russian invasion and annexation of Ukraine were large scale policy changes made multilaterally, unilaterally, and bilaterally. The largest driving mechanism for all changes related to the US participation was the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) introduced by President Obama in June 2014, one month prior to the NATO summit. Some unilateral changes, such as

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<sup>219</sup> (Obama, National Security Strategy, The White House)

<sup>220</sup> Ibid

repositioning of military stock, would later appear in NATO literature on the Readiness Action Plan.<sup>221</sup>

American FP policy outputs related to the crisis began in March prior to the ERI announcement. President Obama after his March address to the Russian President, warned of ‘costs to be paid,’ and ordered the US Department of Defense to reinforce an American air force mission in Poland and the Baltics.<sup>222</sup> However, the response was not intended to be one purely of American force. When asked about a military intervention, the answer Secretary of State John Kerry gave indicated immediately that any military response was NATO’s and would be made through the North Atlantic Council.<sup>223</sup> Lethal aid to Ukraine was discussed as a bilateral option but was ultimately turned down. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel argued that the Ukrainian military couldn’t “absorb sophisticated weapons.”<sup>224</sup>

Ultimately, in June 2014, a \$1 billion-dollar package ERI was requested by the Obama administration. The money was to come from the Department of Defense Overseas Contingency Operations budget and included the following:<sup>225</sup>

- Increased troop presence: to include more air force personnel and equipment, naval patrols in the Baltics and the Black Sea, and an Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) rotationally deployed
- Security infrastructure improvements for training areas and air force runways

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<sup>221</sup> (RAP, February 2016)

<sup>222</sup> (DeYoung, March 12, 2014 ). The movements included almost twenty aircraft. A mixture of AWACs, refueling, and fighter jets were deployed.

<sup>223</sup> (Kerry, March 2, 2014).

<sup>224</sup> (Sen, May 10, 2016 )

<sup>225</sup> (Paul Belkin, July 31, 2014)

- Money for Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova to increase military capacity
- Money for NATO and bilateral exercises

The money was quickly put into action to “reassure” allied MS in the face of a new threat. The initial bilateral exercise started in early 2014 and was called Operation Atlantic Resolve, including Army, Marine, Air Force, and Naval unit participation throughout various countries in East Europe.<sup>226</sup> While the exercises were intended for reassurance, they did not indicate a permanent change. The United States was clear in the immediate response to the crisis that the force posture changes were to be rotational and not permanently based in East Europe.<sup>227</sup>

While funding was increased by the United States, the funds were marked for multilateral and bilateral exercises, with the President was clear that other countries needed to step up and that the US ‘couldn’t do it alone.’<sup>228</sup> The result has been that US provided funding in response to the Russian annexation and invasion in Ukraine has exceeded 13 NATO member’s combined defense budgets.<sup>229</sup> Reports from the 2014 NATO summit included more financial ‘support’ from the NATO MS for the bilateral exercises and money put aside for the pre-positioning of military stock in Europe.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> (Brzezinski, June 3, 2015 ). The exercise included the participation of armored brigade combat teams rotationally deployed. (F. Stephen Larrabee S. P., 2017, p. 30)

<sup>227</sup> (Secretary O. o., June 03, 2014)

<sup>228</sup> (Komorowski, June 03, 2014)

<sup>229</sup> (Kochis, May 29, 2018). The majority of the funding has gone to the US army for the purposes of pre-positioning equipment and for the increased force posture in Europe.

<sup>230</sup> (Banica, Bucharest Iss. 53, )

## American Economic Policy Output Responses

Military aid and sales dramatically increased as a result of Russian aggression. There was a modest increase in military training funds, but the largest changes in training were previously discussed as part of the European Reassurance Initiative.<sup>231</sup> The first year did see a vast commitment for economic policy outputs unrelated to external security for Ukraine: \$20 million dollars for rule of law reform; a \$1 billion loan guarantee that was contingent on a deal with the IMF; and money for ‘anti-corruption, energy security, human rights, and security sector reforms’ that for 2014 was over \$320 million dollars.<sup>232</sup>

Additional US policy outputs included sanctions that were levied following the annexation. A series of executive orders outlined an ever-expanding list of Russian individuals and banks sanctioned unilaterally by the United States.<sup>233</sup> Some of the major sanctions levied during the year after the annexation included suspension of all ‘trade and investment’; multiple banks and individuals sanctioned March 2014; April through December an export ban to Crimea was introduced businesses and more individuals and banks sanctioned; and March 2015 the sanctions were extended.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> (State U. D., Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015)

<sup>232</sup> (Scretary, November 21, 2014)

<sup>233</sup> (Obama, Continuation of National Emergency with Respect to Ukraine, January 13, 2017)

<sup>234</sup> (Ivan Gutterman, September 19, 2018)

## German Policy Outputs

Germany was in a unique situation at the outbreak of the crisis in Ukraine. Germany's role in the upcoming events can perhaps best be described by an article from Carnegie Europe:

Germany has become a leader in the Ukraine crisis for three reasons. First, German power has grown since the country's reunification in 1990. Germany not only has the biggest economy and the largest population in the EU but also lies geographically at the center of the union and is deeply embedded in EU structures. Second, the crisis is of vital importance for Germany because the entire geopolitical order to the country's East is at stake. Third, there was no one else to take the lead.<sup>235</sup>

While the annexation of Crimea had already been discussed with US President Barack Obama in early March 2014, German Chancellor Merkel struck a reserved tone in response to the events, as seen in reporting from the BBC in early March 2014:

"So far she [Chancellor Merkel] has confined her public comments to the less than bombastic "What is happening in Crimea worries us", and stressing the importance of "preserving the territorial integrity" of Ukraine."<sup>236</sup>

Merkel's speech formally addressing the situation occurred on 13 March 2014, over a week past many others. In the speech, she spoke of cooperation with Russia in the past and working together to solve the current crisis, as well as potential sanctions if cooperation was not achieved.

Russia's actions in Ukraine undoubtedly represent a violation of fundamental principles of international law. They would not be relativised by other international law violations. They remain a violation of international law in the heart of Europe, and it is vital that we do not simply return to business as usual, and indeed we have not done so.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> (Speck, March 26, 2015).

<sup>236</sup> (Evans, 5 March 2014)

<sup>237</sup> (Merkel, Policy statement by Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel on the situation in Ukraine , Thursday, 13 March 2014)

Along with France, Germany soon found itself trying to mediate the crisis as it unfolded. In June 2014, the leaders of the two countries met with the Presidents of Russia and Ukraine<sup>238</sup> and attempted to begin a conversation about potential paths forward for peace.<sup>239</sup> The German government over the year also “gradually increased its criticism of Russia,” particularly after the shooting down of MH-17.<sup>240</sup> When the Minsk protocol that was established in September 2014 was soon ‘violated’ and municipal “elections” were planned for parts of Eastern Ukraine, Germany responded back with sharp criticism;

The German government will not recognise the unlawful vote held in parts of eastern Ukraine. EU partners are unanimous on this point... “These so-called ‘elections’ breach both the letter and the spirit of the Minsk Protocol and were not held in compliance with Ukrainian law or the Ukrainian constitution...”<sup>241</sup>

### **German Force Posture Policy Outputs**

Prior to the Russian aggression in Ukraine, Germany had been trimming its military. Between 2010 and 2015, the cuts had been almost half of its army and air force personnel, with a total force of only just over 100,000 personnel.<sup>242</sup> The size of the military in comparison to Russian forces, and a historical disinclination since its reunification to use military force left the Germans with not much to offer in terms of military changes to force posture in 2014.<sup>243</sup> However, the Germans did have much to say in terms of force posture during 2014-2015 for not

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<sup>238</sup> The first meeting between the two since annexation

<sup>239</sup> (Galbert, October 23, 2015)

<sup>240</sup> (Frymark, 2015-02-18 )

<sup>241</sup> (Office G. C., 2014)

<sup>242</sup> (Chang, March 19, 2015)

<sup>243</sup> (Speck, March 26, 2015)



just their own military but other militaries responses. At the 2015 Munich Security Conference, Senator Bob Corker from the United States asked about the German influence,

...Sen. Bob Corker... told the German chancellor it was her country's resistance to sending in arms that has so far given the White House pause. President Barack Obama has yet to decide on the matter and reportedly shares some of Merkel's concerns. "I think most in the U.S. Congress would like to see all of us participate in defensively arming Ukraine...." <sup>244</sup>

The view was not shared amongst all influential policy makers of the time, with then NATO Supreme Allied Commander and US Forces Europe Commander Phillip Breedlove saying that he was "not precluding" the option. <sup>245</sup> General Breedlove said that the "alliance had to consider a permanent deployment," a view not shared by Merkel who successfully lobbied NATO instead for the creation of the VJTF for security and reassurance purposes. <sup>246</sup> Through the time period of 2014-2015, there were multiple instance where Chancellor Merkel stated that the conflict could have no military solution. <sup>247</sup> Likewise, when the Baltics and Poland sought for the United States or NATO forces to have a permanent presence in Eastern Europe, the Germans argued against such actions eventually leading to an agreement for 'persistent rotational forces.' <sup>248</sup>

While the Germans pursued a multilateral approach largely through economic measures, there were small changes regarding their own force posture. The NATO Summit in 2014 saw Germany and other NATO members agree to the two percent of GDP spending. The German defense budget did increase, albeit only by six percent compared to its previous amount and still

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<sup>244</sup> (VANDIVER, February 7, 2015)

<sup>245</sup> (Neuman, February 7, 2015)

<sup>246</sup> (Speck, March 26, 2015)

<sup>247</sup> (Merkel, Every diplomatic opportunity should be used , 6 May 2014 )

<sup>248</sup> (F. Stephen Larrabee S. P., 2017, p. 10)

well below the percentage of GDP of other NATO members.<sup>249</sup> However, there is a consistent ongoing effort that has steadily seen increases in their troop strength since the crisis began.<sup>250</sup> Outside of increases in their force posture, there were other instances where the Germans added capabilities. Germany did agree through NATO to create the VJTF and provided forces for naval exercises and air policing in the aftermath of the Ukrainian invasion by Russia.<sup>251</sup> Humanitarian aid missions were conducted by the German military, with over 100 Ukrainian forces flown back for treatment in German military hospitals, according to news reports.<sup>252</sup>

### **German Economic Related Policy Outputs**

In the absence of a reassurance for Ukraine in terms of military troops or exercises, the Germans responded to events in Ukraine with a different kind of reassurance in terms of economic policy outputs. The European Union responded with strong sanctions of key civilians, businesses, and politicians: the EU also passed visa bans; the European Investment Bank stopped investments in Russia; and embargoes were emplaced on military equipment and other goods.<sup>253</sup> The German leadership of Merkel was instrumental in crafting the EU response. When some members of the EU were reluctant to impose sanctions on the Russians, she was ultimately successful in swaying the countries who were at first unwilling to support sanction.<sup>254</sup> The path was not the ideal path for Merkel to take against Russia, a country with whom Germany shared

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<sup>249</sup> (Arnold, Spring 2016)

<sup>250</sup> (Chang, March 19, 2015). The ongoing process aims to double the fighting force of 2015 by 2025.

<sup>251</sup> (Paul Belkin, July 31, 2014)

<sup>252</sup> (Hofmann, 09.08.2018 )

<sup>253</sup> (Ivan Gutterman, September 19, 2018)

<sup>254</sup> (F. Stephen Larrabee S. P., 2017, pp. 66-67; Frymark, 2015-02-18 )

deep economic ties and against whom the German public was not anxious to sanction.<sup>255</sup> Various members of the German political elite and the public, in large polling percentages, did not at first back the sanctions.<sup>256</sup> However, the annexation of Crimea, and then the subsequent shooting down of MH-17 were too much for Merkel to ignore. An aid package was quickly crafted for a 500-million-euro loan from Germany to the Ukraine and close to 30 million euros in humanitarian aid.<sup>257</sup> Germany also stopped the sale of a ‘military training facility to Russia.’<sup>258</sup>

A close trading partner with Russia, Germany has a large Russia export market and reliance on Russian energy.<sup>259</sup> Combined with its reluctance, uneasiness, and lack of capabilities in terms of utilizing hard power to solve the conflict, Germany led a different type of multilateral approach than the United States in seeking an end to the conflict. Ultimately German and French efforts to find a lasting solution with the Minsk agreements in 2014 and 2015 have been a failure.<sup>260</sup>

### **Analysis of Policy Outputs**

This section of the thesis will focus on evaluating the evidence in the case study for consistency with the key attributes as previously defined. In comparison with Georgia, the Ukrainian case study has had a tremendous amount of policy responses from NATO and its influential MS immediately after the conflict. The responses showed consistency with NATO

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<sup>255</sup> (Mayer, March 10, 2014 )

<sup>256</sup> (Frymark, 2015-02-18 )

<sup>257</sup> (Koszel, 2016; Issue #2, pp. 97-98)

<sup>258</sup> (Paul Belkin, July 31, 2014, p. 16)

<sup>259</sup> (Speck, March 26, 2015)

<sup>260</sup> (F. Stephen Larrabee S. P., 2017, p. 67)

continuing to work as an organization in response to the conflict. Interdependent cooperation was evident through utilizing the summit for decision-making and implementation of new structures like the NATO trusts. A centralized and independent NATO was evident with the expanding new military structures and statements from the SECGEN.

Evidence indicates consistency with the viewpoint of NATO as a community. Policy outputs show consistency of all actors in condemnation of Russian actions. Economic interests, while still present were sacrificed in favor of economic sanctions, embargoes, and halting construction projects in Russia. Disagreements over responses were discussed in traditional NATO norms such as the NAC and the NATO Summit. Strong responses were indicative of a preference for unified actions in responses to Russian aggression with the shared identity of the group.

The largest changes related to force posture. The changes did show consistency with building power capabilities. These results were not maximized absolutely, but instead showed that capabilities were expanded for collective defense of the alliance. No lethal aid was given, nor was combat support provided. Evidence that shows strong consistency with maximizing power capabilities in this regard were the NATO RAP and US ERI. Both programs provided for deepening security structures and providing a refocus to collective defense tasks. Rotational forces, the creation of the VJTF & NFIUs, announcement of new bilateral and multilateral exercises, and repositioning of military stock all indicate that the crisis provided a more unified threat perception that impacted the goals of the organization.

Table 10 Policy Outputs for the Case of Ukraine

	POLICY OUTPUTS		
	NATO	US	Germany
Key Attribute of NATO as an alliance: Maximizing Power Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expanded NRF</li> <li>- Creation of 5,000 VJTF</li> <li>- Increase in Air Policing Mission</li> <li>- New HQs</li> <li>- NFIUs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No lethal aid</li> <li>- Repositioned military stock</li> <li>- ERI</li> <li>- Unilateral exercises in addition to NATO</li> <li>- FP changes would be rotational not permanently based</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No major FP changes due in part to small size of military</li> <li>- Was against permanent basing of troops in E. Europe</li> <li>- Lobbied NATO for VJTF</li> <li>- Small increase in defense budget</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #1 NATO as an Organization: Interdependent Rules Based Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support voiced for AA with the EU</li> <li>- An already strong interdependent rules based structure with ANP and DEEP was strengthened by NATO trusts for defense reforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statements support “reassurance” measures</li> <li>- Loan package was linked to deal with IMF</li> <li>- ERI included funds for increasing Ukrainian institutional infrastructures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Showed consistency with multilateralism in decision making</li> <li>- Involved EU on economic sanctions</li> <li>- Led multilateral effort for peace agreements</li> <li>- Cut economic ties with non-compliance of the rules</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #2 NATO as an Organization: Centralization & Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NATO statements by SECGEN came prior to NAC</li> <li>- Annexation statements were a same day response</li> <li>- New policy outputs associated with RAP expands infrastructure of NATO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Military action was to be debated in NAC per Sec. Kerry</li> <li>- Utilized Wales Summit for disagreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilized Wales Summit for disagreements</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #1 NATO as a Community: Shared Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immediate statement responses</li> <li>- “Values” were immediately addressed in NATO Summit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- President Obama addressed in Strategic Vision as “values”</li> <li>- Consistent statements that “condemn” and present calls for action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A gradual transition to stronger condemnation of events</li> <li>- Helped lead sanction response and pledged increased defense spending</li> </ul>
Key Attribute #2 NATO as a Community: Shared Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Both influential members utilized the normal mechanisms associated with policy outputs: disagreements handled at the NAC and Summit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strong commitment to NATO RAP and increased bilateral responses like Operation Atlantic Resolve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilized normal NATO mechanisms for disagreements</li> <li>- Still pushed for a strong NATO response indicating a more unified threat perception</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

The culmination of the research analyses from chapter three and four show similarities throughout the policy outputs with key attributes associated with the perspective of NATO responding as an international organization to events in both Georgia and Ukraine. The findings demonstrate a connection between the outputs and both key attributes: interdependent rules-based cooperation, and centralization and independence. However, the stronger responses in Ukraine showed a greater similarity with all three key traits of NATO.

Table 11 Combined Policy Outputs

		POLICY OUTPUTS FROM GEORGIA	POLICY OUTPUTS FROM UKRAINE
NATO AS AN ALLIANCE	KEY ATTRIBUTE MAXIMIZING POWER CAPABILITIES	NOT CONSISTENT WITH FINDINGS	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE
NATO AS AN ORGANIZATION	KEY ATTRIBUTE #1 INTERDEPENDENT RULES BASED COOPERATION	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE
	KEY ATTRIBUTE #2 CENTRALIZATION & INDEPENDENCE	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE
NATO AS A COMMUNITY	KEY ATTRIBUTE #1 SHARED IDENTITY	NOT CONSISTENT WITH FINDINGS	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE
	KEY ATTRIBUTE #2 SHARED NORMS	NOT CONSISTENT WITH FINDINGS	CONSISTENT WITH THE EVIDENCE

Results support an argument that the initial policy responses in both incidents indicate NATO acted according to changing goals and security environments in East Europe in a role best defined as an international institution. The number of interdependent institutions created in both

cases were clear indicators, triangulated with a preference from NATO, the United States, and Germany to respond to out-of-area security incidents with multilateralism. The preference was continued through different US administrations of both Presidents Bush and Obama. Compliance through multilateralism and rules-based structures were evident throughout policy outputs associated with statements. Statements indicate a consensus based multilateral decision in both Ukraine and Georgia was expected to come from the NAC. Force posture outputs indicated several rules-based structures were developed or reinforced in response to the crises: enhanced partnerships like the NGC, new trusts for defense reforms in Ukraine, and new military command structures are consistent with a growing centralized role for NATO. All three examples of policy outputs yielded evidence that was consistent with both key attributes associated with NATO responding as an organization.

A shared identity and norms as key attributes of NATO acting as that of a community were not consistent in both cases. The results are not surprising. In 2008, NATO and its member states were faced with different security concerns and state interests. The US was involved in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The transatlantic community had arguably the largest split since the end of the cold war during this period. The war in Iraq had revealed several disagreements within the alliance. The expanding membership into Central and Eastern Europe brought about new opinions on threat perceptions. However, the evidence indicates the conflict in Ukraine renewed the alliance in terms of shared ideals and community values. Stronger condemnations were seen along with a greater force posture change and commitments to increase defense spending. The policy outputs did not indicate that the threat perceptions were unified, but a recommitment to values and shared identity was exhibited in the results.

The key attribute of maximizing power capabilities yielded consistency with policy outputs in the Ukrainian case study and no consistency in the Georgian case study. Reviewing the evidence from both case studies finds similar conclusions in some respects: no lethal aid was given in either case, no combat support was given, and NATO was the preferred option if a need for security forces arose. However, the differences in outputs were different in the case study of Ukraine. Both RAP and ERI included measures for defense reform and training in Ukraine, however the primary focus of exercises was in eastern Europe. The power capabilities were maximized in relation to the threat and not indicative of a total power maximization. Instead the focus was on territorial defense of the MS. A focus on eastern Europe indicates that the characteristic of NATO as an alliance focused on collective defense of its MS is consistent with the findings.

### **Tying the Results Together**

The study has focused on explaining how the characteristics of NATO helps interpret the initial policy outputs of the organization in response to Russian aggression in Georgia in 2008, and in Ukraine 2014. NATO has shown a historic capacity to meet new challenges with new policy outputs. The ability to adapt is indicative of its key traits: an alliance, an organization, and that of a community. However, there are moments when these characteristics carry different weight amongst MS. Throughout the review, the relationship of a changing security environment based on current and fluid threats and MS interests has been key to helping interpret the policy outputs. In a complex environment it is unlikely to identify a sole reason for outputs. However, by analyzing the evidence in accordance with the established framework we can find consistency in which traits of NATO were at play during the creation of the responses. The evidence has confirmed the original working assumption that there was a stronger initial response to Russian



aggression in Ukraine compared to Georgia from NATO and its influential MS of Germany and the United States.

Utilizing the framework for understanding the responses, the characteristic of NATO as a community was not consistent with the outputs in Georgia and returned in Ukraine. No evidence pointed to a change in shared values that help shape the shared identity of the community. However, the evidence through the literature has shown that MS possess different threat perceptions and interests which can impacts its goals. The results indicate that different interpretations can impact the attribute of shared values. The policy outputs are consistent not that shared values did not exist in Georgia, but that there was a disagreement over how events were perceived to have occurred. Different interpretations of events tied with state interest can lead to differing viewpoints of what constitutes a “threat” which leads to different responses. A strong bilateral response was seen in Georgia by the United States. A return to multilateral NATO responses in Ukraine showed consistency with a reengagement of the community trait of NATO in both shared norms in this regard, and a unified perception of events indicative of shared values that shapes the shared identity of the community.

The consistent factor throughout both cases was for multilateral responses and the building or deepening of interdependent rules-based cooperation structures, like the NGC in Georgia and engagement through the NUC in Ukraine. The first response in both case studies indicates a preference for the MS to respond as an organization and strengthen institutional ties where possible to encourage compliance with the organization’s rules. The “rules” were under crisis in both cases. In Georgia, the “rules” did not prevent the NATO partner state from facing Russian aggression. A reset in policies, saw only a small delay in the NRC meetings. In Ukraine, a NATO partner with an existing special commission was under attack. The NRC was

immediately stopped. NATO, the US, and Germany all called for a multilateral response to end the conflict and warned of consequences if compliance was not met. To illustrate this, the timeline between a return to a focus of collective defense took several months. Had the threat been immediate or a preference existed to respond with maximizing power first, the delay would not have been as long. The aggression in Ukraine provided a crisis for the trait of NATO as an organization. The interdependent rules-based structure of partnerships and commissions were not equal to Article 5 protections. To reassure members a stronger response was needed and was soon gradually introduced.

A stronger response is indicative of the trait of NATO as an alliance with a focus on collective defense. There was strong evidence found that supports NATO responded with this characteristic in Ukraine. The responses in Ukraine signaled a unified reemergence of the alliance focused on reassuring MS on its collective defense capabilities. However, this change did not take place immediately. The responses indicate a gradual progression for the push to maximize capabilities, from spring to the NATO summit in summer. The gradual progression is consistent with showing that the first response was to respond as an organization. When the failure of the preferred option did not result in a change of Russian actions or policies, the shared values at stake grew clearer to all MS. The crisis then impacted all the key characteristics of NATO. While the preference for the first response was that of an organization, the policy outputs show that when the crisis impacted all three characteristics of NATO, the organization responded with stronger outputs than the responses in Georgia.

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